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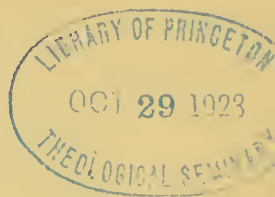


**JOHN FOURTEEN**



# JOHN FOURTEEN

THE GREATEST CHAPTER  
OF THE GREATEST BOOK



✓ BY

JAMES H. DUNHAM, Ph.D.

*Dean of College of Liberal Arts and Sciences  
of Temple University*



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## PREFACE

THE aim of this book is twofold; first to present in conspictive form the spiritual principles developed by Jesus in what many readers regard as the most impressive of His discourses; and secondly to interpret these principles so far as convenient under the shadow of the method made familiar by the inquiries of modern psychology. That a work of this kind might meet a need as yet unfilled became evident to the writer the moment he set himself to the systematic study of the Chapter with a view to public exposition. Valuable homiletic helps, critical vignettes of rare insight, representing every conceivable type of mind, careful historical estimates, occasional sermons of great fascination abound on every hand and are supplemented by the religious zeal of every generation. No preacher or teacher or quiet student of the verses can go to his task without them. They give the drift of feeling, the divisional points which the Speaker emphasized in His farewell appeal. But they do not pretend to exhaust the rich lode of truth here concealed. The claim is made that a sustained treatment of the dominant theme in the Chapter calls for a volume complete in itself. Dr. Bernard in his "Central Teaching of Jesus Christ" massed the valedictory addresses and prayers in one continuous study. His book has never failed of readers. It is the author's hope that the present volume, constructed in part for those who sat in person before him, in part for an audience which only the imagination could descry, may serve in some measure to do for a single group

of verses what the other did effectively for a larger passage—exalt and clarify the words of the divine Preacher.

The first aim was as to form, the second concerns content. It is not for a moment suggested that students of St. John's Gospel have not been men of expert method. Robertson of Brighton, a name, says Matthew Arnold, which we are bound always to mention with respect, has passed the spell of his analytic genius over its concepts and characters, and made obscure facts leap to new meaning before our eyes. Psychology was a real and conscious instrument in his hands even before its new technique was born. In a homelier way, perhaps without appreciating the trend of contemporary science, Marcus Dods grappled with the problem of personality and did his bit towards its solution. This problem emerges in every section of the current work because it is the supreme subject of the Lord's discourse. Fundamental impulses, the value and insidious charm of the sensory image, the various aspects of association, the play of memory, the forming of judgment, the sense of order, the ebullition of feeling, the power of will, the autocracy of Self—these flash in ever-changing figures before bewildered observers, as Jesus pictures eternal Manhood, first in His own Person and then in the lives of His emulators. "He knew what was in man." To react to the deeper symbolism of His words we must penetrate the secrecies of the common mind. Psychology has opened the gate. Therefore the formulas of this science, now the property of students in every field, may with right be summoned to explain the issues of the Chapter.

J. H. D.

PHILADELPHIA, PA.



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## J

### THE STETHOSCOPE OF FAITH

*John 14:1. "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me."*

THE name of Dr. Laennec is one of the most honorable in modern science. It was he who made it possible for the medical practitioner to explore the innermost recesses of the human heart. By an invention, which now seems extremely simple, he increased the hearing capacity of the ear, and made it sensitive to the slightest change in the usual motions of the heart. The Stethoscope is an instrument for noting the activity of the central organ of our body. It discovers what the eye cannot see or the hand touch or the unaided ear detect. It has saved many a life, prolonged many another, and been a distinct boon to the world. We give our tribute of praise to his ingenuity.

There is another Name greater than his; and another discovery laden with infinitely greater significance. There is One who has laid His divine Ear upon the troubled heart of men. He has used no mechanical instrument to learn its hidden symptoms; He has pierced the soul with no electric ray.

In syllables of exquisite love the infallible Physician prescribes for diseased and decrepit spirits. To credulous races that have spent their treasures in quest of a fabulous cure, to scientific genius that offers its

naïve logic to heal the bleeding wounds of hate or ignorance, Jesus Christ speaks the tender and gracious words, "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me."

## I

There is a fatal malady that the world suffers from and Jesus stands ready to analyze it. I do not ask you to debate the matter of sin. I do not ask that you should be able to define its precise meaning or influence. I am only asking that you admit the fact and place of moral disturbance. That is enough for the present.

But that admitted, it is at once evident that the trouble must be localized. No medical man can prescribe for a disease till he knows what its nature is. He seeks for its exact location. Is it in the brain? is it a question of nerves? is a vital organ affected? Let him find that out first; and then he is ready for a cure. It is precisely this skill that commends the Saviour to us as a competent Healer. He proceeded on this plan, when He relieved the ailments of body. He was careful to ask, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" He adopted this course in seeking to give spiritual help. What was the trouble with the young Ruler who came with every protestation of personal homage? Discover that first, and then apply the remedy. The trouble there was not that he had transgressed the moral code. His outward conduct was impeccable. He had not a single stain on his garments. The trouble lay deeper, and Jesus probed to its core. This young man was enamored of his gold and could not part with it, save by tearing out his heart. Jesus put His finger on the wound.

He had about Him now the eleven disciples; the night was dark, and their spirits were shrouded in denser darkness. You can feel the vibrant air of the upper chamber. You can see the moving of an uncanny feeling on their countenances. Every word spoke out the strange and unwonted sorrow that oppressed them. Jesus localized the trouble; Jesus revealed the seat of the new difficulty. And what an immense advantage is gained when you know where the trouble is! It is no longer fighting in the dark; it is no longer a campaign against a hidden or misunderstood enemy. Jesus tells us where the malady lies. It is His duty as an experienced Physician of souls to awake us from the security of a sense of general debility, and center our thought on the immediate and alarming nature of the trouble.

Jesus has no hesitation in saying, it is an affected heart! I sometimes wish that men could be driven from their spiritual lethargy as easily as a man is from his conviction of health, when you tell him his heart is organically wrong. But you may rehearse the symptoms of the spiritual disease in their ears till doomsday; you may let them listen through the stethoscope of Revelation without getting from them a single quiver of regard. They claim to be right; they claim to have no trouble beyond what the general run of the world's citizens possesses; they don't want to know the details, and they spurn the offered remedy. But Jesus gives us to understand that it is an affected heart that troubles us. And may we well pay attention to His words.

I bid you observe, it is not an affected *mind*; that is, the ability to think out and decide a proposition is not impaired. If it were that and nothing else I apprehend that God would not have sent His Son to bleed out His life on an accursed cross. The hemlock would

be a sufficient protest against the folly of earth; you wouldn't need the precious blood of the divine Lord. When it comes to intellectual questions that are bound to agitate the mind, no specific is needed. You know how you settle a knotty question. You affirm that you have done the best you could under the circumstances, and the most erudite philosopher could not do more. And there the matter rests. Or, you reason that man can never expect to grow into moral perfection or lay his hand on the complete treasury of knowledge. His limitations forbid. Hence, what is the need of worrying about it? Will you divert the course of Halley's comet by being anxious lest it crash with destructive power upon the earth? These things are above and beyond our sphere; let us push aside any consideration of them. Jesus did not speak of the troubles of mind.

Again, Jesus did not localize the trouble in conscience. I presume, if we had had anything to do with the men of Galilee in that hour we should have shamed them by an anticipation of their brutal disloyalty to the Lord in His time of need. But though Jesus foresaw that He did not taunt them with it; nor did He argue with them as to the right and wrong of it, and the ineradicable scorch it would leave on their consciences. Paul had a good deal to say about the moral sense which we call conscience. But Jesus passes it by; He knew how easily the will gets paralyzed and the motives checked; and He knew that they could not break that paralysis, so long as the more fundamental organ was inert.

People talk a good deal now about their conscience; as to whether their conscience will let them do this or that, read certain books, take an excursion on the Lord's

Day, play a certain game, be interested in customary social amusements. Conscience is a whirlpool of conflicting emotions, and many are swamped in its turbid waters, when by going further on they might have struck the fair current of an untroubled life. The man who stops to decide the equity of specific points in conduct and is content to remain there will arrive at no appreciative idea of the Lord's diagnosis.

Jesus did not find the seat of trouble in conscience; He went down to the heart. "Let not your heart be troubled"—words of classic charm, words of insinuating grace, words of satisfying peace! Why did He select the organic term? Because it bore the ancestral approval of His race? Because prophet and priest had made it the exclusive medium of a man's relation with God? That is indeed a fact:—"Keep thy heart with all diligence," says the wise man, "for out of it are the issues of life." That is to say, if you keep the fibers strong, the beat true and the movement unaltered, you will lead a good life. But that is not the prime reason for His use of it. He knew that not reason, not abstract right, but a soul's affection for its God was the keynote of religion. He knew that you have to create love in the heart in order to get suitable action. And the heart has always been the unquestioned and dominating seat of love. Hence He went down to the heart.

We have no better message for a somewhat sentimental age like ours than this:—Look to the ambitions that prompt, to the desires that goad, and you will get a true picture of the man. There is the root of trouble and there the medicine must be applied. What are you interested in? What would you sacrifice time and even life for? That is the true index of the heart.



As a sovereign Student of human nature no one ever matched the lowly Man of Nazareth. As an analyst of motive, able to assay with unerring accuracy the simplest reactions of men's minds, He stands supreme among the spiritual experimenters of the race.

## II

But Jesus not only localized the trouble, He diagnosed it. The first step in the cure is to find exactly what the symptoms are. The skilled practitioner will determine at once whether the disease be functional or organic; that is, if the heart is played on in sympathy with other organs, or if it has some distinct weakness of its own. The former may be disconcerting though not dangerous; the latter requires instant attention. It is because the body's life is dependent on the action of the heart that Jesus seizes on it as a symbol of spiritual character. He looks into the soul and discovers a serious disturbance. The term used is strong. The turbulent violence of the sea is described by the same word; the quaking of one's frame in face of some dreadful disaster is given utterance in the same way. We must not blink the fact that a serious decadence is manifest in our moral tissues. What is its cause? Let us probe into the secret operations and read the symptoms.

The Saviour speaks of some overpowering dread. The disciples faced it, that night in the fateful room. Some unexpected and inexplicable calamity hung over them. It was a weird specter with shadowed face and clenched hands. It threatened their beloved Master and hence themselves. His heart was at rest; but theirs were full of tempest. They could hardly await its coming and yet feared to see its real form un-



veiled. This is one of the harshest, bitterest feelings known to the soul of man. How often have nations sat under its spell! I fancy that the French people sank into an oblivious stupor as the shades of St. Bartholomew's Eve spread over the city. What was lurking on the horizon? Was it death to the kingdom, or annihilation to the hated Huguenots? The soul must be of iron and the blood of the consistency of ice to pass unscathed through such terrible scenes.

The same malignant touch of dread rests on men's hearts, when fortunes are seen to be crumbling into dust beneath the stroke of some financial crisis. Many are still living who remember the Panic of '73, when on Black Friday the climax came and noted business houses crashed into ruin, and the nation's credit was almost overthrown. It was an hour to try men's souls; it was a time to test the financial policies of the country; it was a moment to turn men's thought from the failing things of sense to the realities of an eternal truth.

A similar dread, quiet in manner, yet deep in its impressiveness, pervades the hearts of the watchers by the bedside of a dying father. Have you waited thus, noting each gasp, sympathetic with each evidence of pain, desiring the end so that rest might come, and yet realizing what your loss is to be? That is trouble, when the heart moans out its pain. That is the very agony that Jesus passed through on the road to the tomb of Lazarus; for it is written: "He groaned in spirit, and was troubled." Even the holy, compassionate Lord knew the anguish of human sorrow. But what must be the appalling dread to him who looks for himself into the future and sees no hope? Every true

man gets some sense of it here. These unanswered questions, these hard problems, these unexpiated sins!—what shall I do with them? What are you doing with them? Then, the look into the unopened future, years and cycles of years, unending ages, beyond this world, in a world, that must be either the apotheosis of beauty or the azimuth of misery! How can I meet such uncertainty? This is dread without measure; this is dread, such as not even the personal withdrawal of the Master could suggest. This is life in its fullness or death in its bitter curse. I do not wonder that unsteady souls have staggered unprepared into the curtained dark and disappeared.

Such was the first element in the disciples' sorrow. There was another, to them beginning to be real; to many a weary, defeated spirit only too familiar a companion. I mean the sense of loneliness. They had clung to Christ, depended on Him, walked by His directing hand. They had lived those three years as though He was always to be visually before them. And now He was about to disappear. Their sodden minds at last took that in. They would not have Him for their Guide. If you could gather up the bitterest drops that fall from humanity's cup, I think you would find them composed for the most part of the sorrows of isolation. We are alone—how many persons are alone!—misunderstood, ridiculed, or just left severely to their own company. You may lay your best friend in the tomb and think over his benefactions to you, his ardent love, his warm appreciation, his unstinted sympathy; and that consoles for a moment. But when you return to your home and hear no voice that calls you, see no face that smiles into yours, touch no hand, once vibrant with affection, then, oh, then you exclaim:—

“The stately ships go on,  
To their haven under the hill;  
But oh! for the touch of a vanished hand,  
And the sound of a voice that is still!”

But keen and biting as that loneliness is I fancy it is surpassed by another,—when a young man leaves the ancestral roof and goes out to make his way in the world. He is immersed, lost, absorbed in the business of the city; his days come and go with unregistered rapidity; while back in the country alone and unnoticed sit the aged parents who had spent their all for him. What would they give for a few words from his beloved hand; what joy the simple card from him would impart! But they are left alone by the old hearthstone, in the old house where memory is vivid and affection keen. Yet what are these to the embrace of the strong arms which in childhood were thrown so lovingly about their neck? My friend, if you have a father or mother whose life is at its setting, let not this night's shadows close ere you send the word of love to aching hearts.

That is the bitterness of being alone. It is enough. Yet there is another sort more desperate than it. This steeps the heart in trouble that is harder to remove. This deals not in present but future significances. It comes to expression when a man realizes that he cannot change the fiber of his heart. It states its case when the heathen pilgrim seeks release from the load of sin by every conceivable device of penance. At that moment a man understands that he is alone. His friends cannot support him. His spiritual adviser is helpless. His boasted religion is a farce. His cold, correct moral life is a marble tablet to inefficiency. That penitent on India's burning sands—have you seen

him? He measures his length across the province that he may climb the sacred hill and stand to his neck in the cold waters on its summit. And then, forsooth, says the priest, his sins are forgiven! But God provides otherwise; He reveals another Mt. Moriah for bound and smitten Isaac. The Christian missionary falls into converse with the pilgrim, learns his tale, his hopes, his eager expectations, and at once unfolds to him the true Way. Don't you wish you could crush out such loneliness, too? Would you not give the treasures of purse for a chance to bring the joy of heaven to a wearied soul? Why not try? Why not raise to your honor a monument of grace in the person of a Son of Adam disengaged from the guilt of sin? There on the silent hillside the ambitious Hindu sank on his knees and surrendered himself to Christ. No more loneliness, no more sorrow, no more dread—he is safe! No man can be alone when Jesus Christ is his invisible companion.

## III

I have pointed out the malady; let me now set forth the cure. "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me." These words begin the most precious chapter in the entire Bible. The gusts of criticism may take away the rest. If it leaves me this, I am content. The sorrows under which our world groans we know. We know, too, the prevalence and virulence of sin. And we seek a balm that can heal. Here it is, an infallible antidote, a veritable panacea, faith in God and in Christ.

What do you understand by faith? We have it certainly as one of the most familiar elements in human life. We could not go on without it. We

should find business practice and social intercourse wrecked and gone, if this quality were eliminated. If I had not faith in a man's honesty I should never trade at his store; nor would you. If I did not regard the directors of the bank as good and trustworthy citizens I should take out what little money I have there at once. If I thought that my reputation was not safe in my friend's hands I should cut him from my books without delay. That is the value we put upon trust. Indeed, the financial world goes further and builds its entire system of modern business on a series of credits; a chain of trust so gigantic as to girdle the globe with its links. In these days currency does not pass from hand to hand, from office to office, from land to land; commercial paper standing for millions or for mere units is the basis of all our modern transactions. And that is the symbol of trust.

Well, the familiar expedient is transferable to the spiritual world. Jesus set His stamp of approval on it. We have used His words in a medical sense. Let us continue the figure. Drugs can do much to assist the physician in his work; but everything they cannot do. When it comes down to the first requisite, they must take a subordinate place. The first requisite is faith in his skill. Many a case has been cured by confidence in the power of the man who is called in to aid. And for the matter of that, the entire treatment must be permeated with faith. For who would take the prescribed medicines, if he did not believe in the knowledge of the man who gave them?

The conditions are analogous. We are in need of help. The Bible recommends faith in God. We are not in position to know God. We cannot even tell by severe reasoning, if He exist. We may guess at it



from certain things we are sure of in nature and from the power of the human mind, but there is a hiatus between knowledge and the superior intuition known as faith; "trusting where we cannot prove," as Tennyson says. That gap can never be filled, seeing that we must have infinite Intelligence ere we can know God. Hence we have got to trust, we must capture the sweet reliance on the gracious love of God that shone even in the Lord's face.

What happens if we refuse to exercise faith? Two things immediately follow: first, we cannot approve ourselves to God, for without faith it is impossible to please Him. Inspect the records of the Old Testament and the New. Study their peace, their joy, their successes. Whence has the splendor come? What made Abraham great and David strong? What awoke the magnificent pæans of praise from Isaiah's lips and the stern denunciations of evil by Jeremiah? Nothing but their faith in the living God. What broke Paul from his iron-bound Pharisaism and Peter from the humdrum tradition of his family occupation? Nothing but the sense of an overpowering faith in the divine Lord. Such is the first effect of faith.

The second is like unto it, a serene and exemplary life in face of a critical company of observers. Men have tried to organize a moral code and live a moral life without God; they have failed. Select the greatest books on ethics that cumber our shelves, pile them in one vast heap, let their wisdom ascend in flames to the ether above; and the world loses little if anything of essential worth. We are not wooed to rest by the ingenious formulas of pragmatic valuation; but let the first spark of grace light the heart; let the first glint of faith play on a man's life, and a change, a powerful

awakening ensues. New manhood and regenerated society, chastened business principles and a cleansed political atmosphere are at hand. These bespeak the action of a power supernal. These are the indices of faith. If God gives faith to a nation the fountains of falsehood are broken up, the measures of dishonest dealings are rectified and the interests which bind people together are impregnated with the spirit of love. May God give such faith to every beleaguered nation now, a faith to do His will and live His laws and reflect His word. Let the world know that faith in God is the only and the certain cure for social evils. Let it learn the incontestible apothegm that no man can do hurt to his neighbor if he find in him the message of his imperial Maker. Have faith in God and instantly you conceive a fine resilient faith in your fellows; with amazing swiftness you see unveiled the better side of their character, their shadowed sanctities, their inner hopes, and their unmistakable destiny.

## IV

But Christ will not stop there. The diseases of the heart are not cured by a general trust in the divine Being. You may get that in a casual way in the valleys of China or on the burning plains of Arabia, where the Crescent lifts its minarets to heaven and the pilgrim spreads out his robe of prayer. Races untouched by the currents of civilized life have a dim conception of God and look to Him with awe. The red man's fancy is soothed or stimulated, as he thinks of the Great Father and the happy hunting grounds. There is a dumb unspeaking trust among the children of our kind but it cannot bring lasting peace; it is not enough. There must be revelation, a new and imme-

diate communication from God to His people. Some of it came to the men of the Old Testament. They gloried in their Sinais and their Hebrons, their smoking altars and devoted temple. But even these were not enough to convey the full speech of the Eternal.

“ They heard the trailing garments of the night  
Sweep through her marble halls; ”

but it was still night. The daybreak tarried. Prophet and seer had scanned the skyline and sensed the glimmering rays of dawn; but they could not discover the rising sun. Even the favored Baptist by the river's brim, with eyes holden at first by the very shimmer of the morning light, was forced to cry, “ Art thou He that should come or look we for another? ” Faith in God as the Jews conceived it was proudly free, beyond the fairest dreams of uninspired fancy. But it was not enough. That faith though free was yet vague and incomplete. It was bathed in the shadows of fear. It was bordered by the noxious airs of ignorance. Faith in God was the beginning; it awaited its consummation in a new and personal trust provoked by the Incarnate Lord. Why should men have faith in Him? Let us see.

We should believe in Jesus because He alone has given the correct interpretation of God. Much as we may try to see the New Testament idea of God foreshadowed by the Old we are haunted perpetually by the recollection that for Moses and David and even for Isaiah Jehovah is the *Magister poenarum*, the Awarder of punishment. Fear is perforce the sum and substance of faith. I believe, because I covet continuance of life. The flashes from Sinai's top and the “ Holy, Holy, Holy ” of the angel choir tell the same inevitable



story. Fear is a factoring element in religion. God cannot be approached with the unheeding impetuosity of the child. The Lord did not fail to paint in flaming colors the righteous judgments of heaven, but he elicited a deeper quality from its abode in Deity. He spoke of Love. He gave to God a new name. He called Him Father. The sweetest, noblest relation on earth he seized upon in order to depict the holy Grace of heaven. A quiver of rare feeling, I conceive, must have passed over his auditors when they heard the name. God had been known as the Father of Israel, Creator of the new national integrity. He had never entered the individual heart with intimate and tender affection such as this. Had they not heard their children exclaim, "My father did this, my father said that?" and every time the blood ran warmer and the nerves waxed stronger for the duties of home and fireside. And now if they can articulate the cry of Father to the Unseen Spirit, shall not fear grow pale and burdens be lifted? Law has given way to love, the thunders of Sinai to the melodies of Galilee. God will not decline to save His people. His permanent warrant is the face and cross of Jesus.

We should believe in Jesus, because He has opened the gate of life. It was closed, barred, sealed, shadowed by dark uncertainty before this. Men had hoped for a better existence hereafter; they had no assurance, save as the grave injustices of this current world stood sponsor somehow for a happier issue beyond its brink. The faithful of the Old Testament had forsooth seen the fringe of a glorious Future, as the divine Lord passed through the tents of His people. But there was no assurance. Now all is altered. Christ Himself has penetrated the realm of the Dead, opened its

secrets, crushed its tyrannous power and affirmed the continuity of believing life. We may enter rest through Him; that is the message of the Bible. If we trust His power we may entertain hopes of the same immortality. Other men caught at shadows; we may bathe in the splendor of proven truth. Troubles are quenched in the glorious light, inequalities perish, sin is dead, and love persists the unchallenged Victor of the world.

The medicine of an evangelical faith has brought the last full comprehensive cure to the heart's dread malady and Jesus' promise is a lucid fact.

## II

### THE WAY NOT THE GOAL, THE OBJECT OF QUEST

*John 14:4, 5. "And whither I go . . . ye know the way. Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest, and how can we know the way? I am the way."*

**I**T was a difference of angle that marked the thought of Jesus and His inquiring disciple. If you enter the region of celestial mechanics and measure the relations of the stars, you must use different instruments from those which mete off the bounds and turns of earth. It would be absurd for the shipmaster to try to determine his course by the offices of the theodolite. Good enough for the field, for the city street, for the stretch of shady beach upon the sea's margin,—but how could its chains ever reach the unplumbed deeps of the sky?

We must expect, when we compare the Saviour's thoughts and ours, to find a broad unspanned interval between. If heaven lay near to Him,—nearer than it lies about a child's infancy,—and if that same heaven is shut tight to our eyes, to Thomas, to Philip, and even to St. John himself, there is nothing to lament. The angle of sight is different, very different. He looks from the point of view of eternity; we can gaze only from the low summits of time. The strange thing in this verse is that with all the difference of vision Christ tells His friend that he, Thomas, really knows

though he protests he does not. He says nothing as to *why* Thomas should know, though a keener mind would have caught His meaning at once. He simply enters the soul of this untaught Galilean disciple and finds written there in living letters a truth that in later days would blaze forth in unspeakable beauty.

My duty here is to follow His lead and insure for you possession of the economic principle, that not the Goal but the Way is the object of all spiritual quest. This was a sufficient answer to the young man's question and it will be to any you may put today. Let us note two facts in our discussion; first, the capacity of the soul for knowledge, and secondly, the specific thing we are to know.

## I

If any man thinks the Bible has no place for human reason he makes a vast mistake. The meddlesome attempt to set reason and faith in opposition is vain. It is as though a man supposed that he had two organs in his head, one for thinking and the other for trusting. There is no more truth in this than there is in the theory that your mind is by nature cut up for you into three parts, thought, feeling, and will, and that when you use one compartment you seal up the others, just as you may stop all communication between the compartments of the modern steamship. Whenever a man uses his mind he is using himself. Now religion which springs from the soul and not the body must use the same organ that science exalts. It uses the several phases of the mind, too. It is not content with boiling over in fervid emotion; its sole effort is not to excite the will, often considered the essence of manhood. Religion seats itself in the intelligence. It makes its

appeal to a man's capacity for knowing. You would be surprised to find how many times Jesus asks for the same kind of certainty that the scientist demands.

Study, for example, the word which is imbedded in this text. You may be sure that the evangelist would translate the language of his Lord with sympathetic exactness. "Ye know the way." There are two ways for knowing a thing. One regards the object as being in position. Any citizen of the town having passed by a particular church would say, "I know the Presbyterian church," and his use of the term would be correct. In the same way one person may remark of another, "Yes, I know him; I meet him in business circles, on the street, in the club. I know where he lives, I have seen his family, I know his general business standing." That is one well-defined meaning of the word. We employ it without reserve and sometimes throw into it more implications than we have a right to do.

There is another turn to the word; the knife cuts deeper now; the sight grows keener. We approach the thought involved in Jesus' assertion. To know is now not simply to know *of*, but to know *about*; and you had better be careful, when you cite the word in that sense. The courts may have something to say to you, if you use the deeper meaning and do not square your conduct with your language. The responsibilities of life creep into the word now; you must weigh well every letter ere you utter it. The passerby knows the church, knows its beautiful proportions, the well-cut stones, the chaste designs, the noble tower, the handsome windows dedicated to the memory of saints who have worshipped there. But oftentimes he knows very little else. Does your knowledge stop there? If so, it is

very small indeed. Or does it go on? Does it include the purpose of the church, the place of worship, the "beauty of holiness," the consecration of many lives to the service of Christ, the Holy of Holies, where many tender hearts have found the hope of safety through a crucified Redeemer? That I take to be the higher signification of the word, and would that you might know the church as "Bethel," the House of God, the very gate of heaven!

Again, one man makes claim to know another. How much does he know of him? What he has included in his statement will not go very far. I fear that it wouldn't throw much light on the settlement of a legal case. You cannot know an acquaintance until you get down into the secret processes of his heart. He may be very calm, very prosperous on the surface but underneath there is a caldron of conflicting emotions. Some men take pains to conceal their real selves. The world outside never peers into the nooks and crannies of the inner life; indeed, is never allowed so to do. It is the sincere friend alone who can be said to know another. Then face answereth to face as in a mirror; then words count for their actual value; then all disguise is torn away and the uncharted deeps are opened. Thus you know the motives, the impulses, the unhallowed thoughts, the profound ambitions, the bitter defeats, the reasons for genuine joy; you know them all. You may truthfully say that you know the man. That is the sense in which Jesus used the word; for John has it so in his Gospel. "Ye know the way," by an intimate personal contact with it; and deny it or not, Thomas and his fellow-disciples were later to find out that Jesus was right.

But someone meets me with an objection here. I



shall entertain it without hesitation. "What ground have we for holding, that the mind can take in religious truth in the same way as these other matters you have mentioned?" I have referred to the bias some cherish against letting reason have any chance in the field of spiritual realities. It is not my business here to argue that out. If you wish light on the subject go to Cardinal Newman, before he got involved in the bigotries of a medieval theology. What I intend to do is to show that however you may reason against it the fact is plain, men insist on a knowledge of God. They call it "knowing God," and they have just as much right to the word as the physicist has, when he speaks of knowing the law of gravitation. That law is not proven by contact with the five senses of the body; you never see or hear or touch it. It is a deduction from formulas and a correct deduction, too. God is in a sense a deduction; for Christ says to Philip, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." If we hadn't become acquainted with Christ our acquaintance with the divine Organizer of world and soul would have been incredibly small.

But I prefer to start the argument from the other end, and say that the soul gets its right to exclaim "I know," because of its inherent need. We cannot do without God. We could not have come into being without Him, to be sure. But that is not what I mean. The substance of the spirit of man is plastic in the hands of the great Artificer. We cannot fight out our controversies alone; we cannot solve the incessant problems by ourselves. The old maxim of Augustine in his "Confessions," a reminder of the subtle temptations with which he wrestled and whose power he

eventually crushed, awakes in us a thrill of sympathetic joy:—

“God hath made us for Himself,  
And our souls are restless,  
Till they rest in Him.”

After all, it is not argument, it is just plain knowledge that grips the soul. It is the return of Paul's certainty: “I know whom I have believed.” There we take our stand as Christians in ages past have done. We accept the challenge our Lord flings down: “Ye know the way.” Yes, we know religious truth, and all the objectors in Christendom cannot deny our right to its possession.

But wait one moment! If we have a right to know then I ask, How much of spiritual reality do we actually hold in our hand? How earnestly have we striven to get at the meaning of divine truth? This is not tantamount to asking how much you know of the Bible. For a man might commit to memory every precious passage in that Book, and yet know nothing of the inner heart of its Author. I have heard the words quoted impressively by men who I am sure never caught the animating spirit. They had not reached the second level of knowledge which we have just considered. I say to you that no man shall reach it who refuses to expend some effort. Thomas sulked disappointed and forlorn on the lower level, complaining that he did not know the way or the goal. Why should he? He had accepted the common ambition of the Jew as the only interpretation of the Lord's mission. He thought that Jesus was going to raise an earthly throne, and the scheme pursued by Jesus seemed utterly disqualified for that purpose. Hence he was confused. He didn't



try to understand his Master's purpose. "Too bad," we exclaim, and then ourselves slink away with no true attempt at understanding.

Now mark these words; no human enterprise thoroughly worth while was ever carried through without a prodigious amount of work. I cited the law of gravitation. Do you know how much effort it cost Newton to fix, verify, and clinch that law? For twenty years he worked on a suggestion of Kepler, the astronomer, turning out reams of figures and formulas, catching up the slight hint of a falling apple, and proving at last that the force which binds the moon to the earth is the same force that operates in the biggest and the smallest part of the universe. Well did he merit the tribute of a distinguished contemporary:—

"Newton was the greatest genius that ever existed, and the most fortunate; for we cannot more than once find a system of the world to establish."

I commend the thought to you; you will never find out God except by searching. Religion demands the best energies under our control. You have no hesitation in applying intelligence and zeal to the problems of business, physical betterment, moral uplift for the state. You regard any author as crude or lazy if he will not use his abilities to enrich our literature instead of maiming or debauching it by mediocre service. Shall we ask anything less in the realm of spiritual life?

Moreover, we have one sanction in religion which often is not felt in other matters; we never fail to get something for our pains. Even this uncertain Thomas got it at last. No soul ever passed through the breakers as Paul did. His bigoted friends did not

suppose that the prince of zealots would ever be lost to their cause. The church heard with wonder the report, that "he which had destroyed now preached in the name of Jesus." He reached the coveted haven, he attained the promised peace. The page of history is sprinkled with the toils men have endured and the sufferings passed, from which no adequate reward issued. That strange figure which amused or maddened the age of Erasmus; his search for touchstone or formula which might change the baser metal into gold, Paracelsus, immortalized in Browning's drama,—what is he but a type of many a fatuous seeker in the field of human endeavor? You spend a lifetime in the quest of goods, deliberately limit your spiritual horizon, give little concern for the development of family affection, no time, no contribution to the victory of moral truth in the world; and when you get to the end what kind of an inventory can you make up? You know a good deal about stocks and bonds, the price of securities, the relation of Steel to the country's prosperity, and the thousand and one details of a business career; but what do you get for return? Six feet of earth and the epitaph: "Whose shall these be?" That is not the terminus of the spirit's quest. God provides us knowledge of the kind that fits for eternity. And if you haven't got it yet you had better awake to the need of prompt attention, ere the shadows fall and your soul be bathed in the chill of death.

## II

We advance to the second assurance of this text, viz., that the burden of our knowledge is not the Goal of Safety but the Way to reach it. This seems to have been the initial difficulty in Thomas' mind: "Lord,

if you don't show us the place you are going to, how can we be expected to find out the road?" I fancy that millions of readers have thanked Thomas for his question and exclaimed: "That's my trouble, too! I want to know the end and then I shall look for the way." Well, there is a practical hint in the words which we ought to consider. It is true that no sensible man starts out on the highway without having some destination in view. For if he had none the inquiry of a friend, Where are you going? would make his course seem ridiculous. It is also true that a road is not a road unless it ends at some determined point. I remember a street that seemed to spring right out of a Western city into the prairie beyond, and no end in sight. But the end was definite enough when one knew it.

It might appear, then, as though Christ's implication did not square with the facts: "Whither I go . . . ye know the way." Absurd to bid them seek the path when the objective point was kept secret, or at least was very dimly revealed! Give these men, give us today ample information about the goal of our hopes and we shall be diligent enough in searching for the course. But Jesus was not immediately concerned with the end; He wanted His disciples to get their feet on the right road. He told them, there was a heaven; He taught them a good deal about the kingdom of God. That is the destination; but He makes them feel just here that all discussion of Goal is useless if their hearts are not at peace with God.

I am convinced that this is right. It is right from the standpoint of definition. How can you really know what heaven is, until you have passed through the stages that lead up to its gate? And how can you

begin to understand the love of a heavenly Father unless you see its colors and hear its tones in the Person of His Beloved Son? Take the young prince who expects to succeed his father on the throne. He knows something about the honors and responsibilities of the place by hearing about them or observing them in his father's demeanor. But he cannot understand them without a severe course of training which step by step fits him for the heavy burdens of state. The Way must be known before the Goal can be suitably apprehended. Therefore, it is not our business to strike the high poetic range of fancy and make gorgeous pictures of the heavenly City. John has done that for us and we had better let it drop there. Our business is to get in touch with the sacred vehicle by which we may scale the heights. Our duty is to follow the road marked out in the inspired Book. Let us hasten to read aright this symbol: "I am the Way."

The Way is unfolded in a Person; the way *is* a Person. Never before was such a proposition presented to a thinking world. Multitudes had risen up to announce themselves as guides; none had ever essayed to be the Path. The founder of a religion is not an unique personage. We have had enough of them, men who boded good, and men who boded evil. We have seen him who having passed a spotless youth taught his people to despise the claims of body and win redemption by the subtle arts of discipline. We have found others who laid the bonds of ceremony on aching hearts and promised peace thereby. The entire gamut of human ingenuity was compassed, and still the anguish of an unforgiven soul remained. Now comes One who puts away the machinery of religion and directs attention to Himself. His statements are mere rubbish if He be as other

spiritual leaders have been. What more irrational than this: "I am the Light of the world," "I am the Bread of Life," if Christ were just another Moses, just another Buddha with a little more love thrown in! Could you imagine the founder of the Buddhist religion saying, "I am the Light of the world"? They have said,—at least one semi-poetic journalist has said it,—that Buddha was the light of Asia; and so in a sense he was. His religious tenets kept that dark land under a partial spell of order. But Christ is the Light of the world, and has lighted every man that cometh into the world. We tie up to a Person here, not to a body of rules nor to a set of dry formulas. This is the fact, which first of all distinguishes Christianity from other religious faiths. It is a fact of cardinal importance. The main difficulty in the Old Testament was the inability to make God intelligible to the soul. Now we enter His presence in the Person of His Son.

The power of personality has never been so elaborately proven as in this Life. We are studying the soul today with unconquerable zest. We delight to visit its innermost cells and hear it chant the notes of sovereignty, of aspiration, of affection. The brain as an organic product is the subject of fascinating interest; but the mind that sits enthroned there is of incomparably greater interest. We delight to study the action of one personality on another, noting how an insidious influence steals from one man's thought into his neighbor's. We are charmed with the play of some massive emotion, when indignation, for example, sweeps over the soul and breaks out in tempestuous speech. Did you ever study Christ the Lord thus? Did you ever trace the movements of love in His face, His words, His gestures? Can you see the Face



wreathed in gracious smiles as He takes the children on His knee and breathes on them the heavenly benediction? Can you catch the affection exuding from His heart when upon the cross He commits His mother to the safe-keeping of His beloved disciple? That was the Person, the divine Son, the holy Master, acting upon other persons about Him.

Again, did you ever read the accents of righteous indignation in voice and look? Ah! those mighty invectives against rebellious cities, Bethsaida, Chorasin, Capernaum—how the wrath of an offended God will fall on them! Have you heard the scorn, the anger in His words to the hypocritical Pharisee: "Whited sepulchres, beautiful without but within full of dead men's bones; how shall ye escape the condemnation of hell?" Did you ever listen to the calm, alluring words of invitation: "Come unto me and I will give you rest"; "And I, if I be lifted up, shall draw all men unto me"? With a Personality like this He bore down opposition, created hope, awakened faith, and cemented the convictions of His followers into a living church which today holds aloft the same Form as its Lord and Saviour.

To Him, then, we must cling for safety; to this personal Master we must bend will and desire. At times it seems that a nation's life hangs on the efforts of a single statesman. What but Bismarck's gigantic will carried Germany to her new position in the world? What but the quiet, determined, unyielding service of Cavour stemmed the tide of disunion and welded the separated and jealous states of Italy into a unified kingdom? If these men had not been at hand would Europe today be what it is? Much depends on the personal equation in a nation's career. Everything

depends on the Man of Galilee in the matter of spiritual destiny. To God, to heaven, to a life of perfect usefulness, there is no Way but His. If you know not that Way, that is, if you have no acquaintance with Christ you will not reach the goal. Your business precisely is to get Him into your heart.

But the meaning of Christ is not exhausted when we have looked into His Face. We must also take note of His work. We may chide Thomas all we please for his obtuseness. He should have known that this quiet, reserved citizen even with his supernatural power would not try to unseat the Romans from their authority; he would never think of bundling together these fractious and centrifugal Jews and making them into a harmonious nation. He couldn't do it; nobody could do it. What an inept and miserable dream! And yet Thomas was a patriot, and patriots have clung to more tenuous hopes than this. And Thomas had seen Jesus confound Jews and Romans alike by His incisive answers. Why should He not feel that this wonderfully wise leader could find a way to bring back Israel's greatness and make Jerusalem again truly the home of Jehovah?

The trouble was not in Thomas' faith, but in his knowledge. He did not know the secret of the Lord's mission. And there lies the trouble with much of the church's impotence today. If we really knew that the work of Jesus was to save this world by blood we should put aside much of the foolish endeavor which goes by the name of Christian service and get down to actual work. Therefore, mark the true definition of His work. He kept telling these men that life for Him led to just one point, a bitter death. He showed them that the death when accomplished should effect a



ransom. Ransom implied some kind of bondage not of body or mind, but of heart; and the only heart-bondage we know is sin. Hence the death of Jesus meant release from sin. But for whom? For the Jews? for the enlightened nations of the earth? No, for "many," that is, for all. Jesus was to die to save mankind from the fruits of sin. Such is the mission of our Master. Thomas could not take it in at the moment; he could not see that his own destiny was written there.

Many within the church are today as obtuse and dark-minded as he. If we knew this Way as we are commanded to know it I am convinced that many enterprises which now pass for Christian would be abandoned. I am convinced that we should be ashamed to acknowledge connection with some of the social customs that are now in part patronized by the church. If we knew this Way as we are commanded to know it I am certain that we should be humiliated by the hollowness of our attempts to preach and teach the Word. That there should be millions at this moment who have never heard the gracious Name is a fair proof that the church has not understood the meaning of this Way. We stand now before the mandate, and before the opportunity; shall ye let them go by unanswered?

Jesus says to us, "YE KNOW THE WAY."

### III

#### SPIRITUAL MOULDS

*John 14:5. "Thomas saith . . . vs. 8,  
Philip saith . . . vs. 22, Judas saith unto  
him."*

A FAMOUS English writer described the human mind as a piece of white paper void of characters upon which piece by piece the story of a life was to be written. A better figure is that which occurs often in the Scripture, the clay lying plastic in the hands of the potter, the mould or form into which or about which it is to be fashioned, the infinite care which the serious Artificer bestows on every line and curve, and lastly the finished product of graces manifold and charm untold.

I stood one day in the spacious halls of the Sèvres manufactory near Paris. The operator was at work on a delicate vase, oblivious of our presence. Deftly, benevolently his hands pressed the yielding clay. It seemed almost like a thing of life under his touch, like a creature of his own flesh. Slowly the vessel took shape, slowly the dainty features of the design were woven into the texture of the earth. Compared with the speed of the whirling machine the growth of the vase was tedious. But there was no tedium in the eye of the artisan. He was engrossed in his task. He was modeling a piece that the world of taste would marvel at. Here porcelain art had its throne. Here were

gathered the exquisite moulds of beauty. No equal to them exists in museum or potter's room over all the earth. No wonder the fascination is intense!

Spiritual moulds are being framed more precious in worth, more enduring in essence. The human soul has its types. They are various, diversified beyond the power of a single mind to calculate. Never yet has nature wrought out two faces of exact similitude. The lineaments are the same, the organs of response to outward suggestion are the same. The racial color or the national tinge or the reflection of temperament may make a change in expression and specify the group. And yet no man exactly repeats the inward life of his neighbor. Striking elbows in the jostle of the street we walk antipodally apart in the secrecy of spirit. What is the cast of your thought? "Thomas saith . . . Philip saith . . . Judas saith," three souls that had but a single word in common, "Master."

## I

We study first the man Thomas. To sum up his salient traits, let us call him the Stubborn Critic. Others have seen in him the apostle of realism, the skeptic, the man with the gloomy disposition. In a measure he was each and all of these; but neither one does justice to the disciple whom Jesus would not allow to drop out of the sacred circle. To be sure we have only a partial portrait. Saving his name in the list of apostles, we see him only three times in the entire evangelical narrative. We must be careful then not to read into his character what pious fancy might like to find there. But we have enough to catch one or two definite elements in the picture and by these we take our stand.

He was fundamentally a critic. He could not help

being it. He was born with that breath in his body, and sanctified or not he would die breathing its air. Now the temper of inquiry which he evinced was not native to the Hebrew blood. The Old Testament does not ask questions as to the Why and the How, certainly not in the matters of natural science. It does weigh with exceeding anxiety the questions of moral right and divine judgment. The Book of Job seethes with vehement interrogations. Every page is seamed with an indignant or submissive plea. It treats of such facts as the immortality of the soul and the ineffable course of the stars; but it never discusses the origin of life or the source of the firmament's order. Israel lived in a drama, and a drama never gives reasons. Israel wrote a history, and a history is lucent with facts, while the grounds of action are hidden beneath a canopy of impenetrable mystery. But somehow Thomas had scented the fragrance of Hellenic wisdom. Cradled by the borders of another civilization in "Galilee of the Gentiles," he must have found keen enjoyment in the exchange of views with men of a different race. I venture to think that he puzzled and annoyed his boyish friends, exasperated his elders and got himself cordially disliked for his pains. Even the gracious presence of the Lord could not extinguish the critical temper. Let us see how it developed.

There are two phases to criticism you are aware, the one concerns the facts to be determined, the other the statement of their truth. The one says you must be sure that things are as they are represented to be. This was Thomas' position on the day of the resurrection. He wanted to see the revived Lord just as eagerly as the other men in the apostolic band. His affection was as deep and as pervasive as theirs. But he was held

back by an inward compulsion; he could not believe without evidence. He must satisfy the demands of judgment by a careful and first-hand scrutiny of the facts. It was his nature to test the articles of proof, just as it is the instinct of ponderous animals to test every place they tread upon.

There can be no valid objection to this course. In fact we need the habit of critical scrutiny in the affairs of religion. We swamp our souls in a flood of dogmas that have no real value to faith. We fill the church with a multitude of crude and uninspected members whose religious experience and insight are at a minimum. I believe in making the tests of discipleship so rigid that only the strong spirit will dare to accept. Jesus did that; He required that a man must be willing to give up his dearest friend and his most coveted ambition in order to follow in His steps. On the other hand, it is possible to make your critical inspection too rigid. You may refine doctrine and sublimate character so that no soul on earth can reach the height proposed. Thus you bar the kingdom to silent, timid souls who dare not venture out on the mountaintops of faith but crouch anxiously and in fear at their base. True criticism demands that the central light be clear, but it is not at first concerned with the reflection of the several satellites.

Once more, the critical habit insures a clear statement of the truth. It must have it. Thomas was in quest of it and erred in overestimating its value. For example, he puts his question to the Lord at the Table: "We know not whither thou goest and how can we know the way?" Now plainly it would be very foolish to pursue any path unless you had determined the goal of the journey. Otherwise, you might wander in the

thicket of the woods and never get the benefit accruing to the man who followed a straight road. The critical mind of the disciple saw a fallacy in Jesus' teaching; at least he thought he did. And he unceremoniously called on Christ to correct His reasoning, elucidate His point, make them see just what He meant by telling them that they knew the way. It is quite evident that you never get anywhere until you fix your mind on some object. We are constantly bidding young men to make choice of trade, business, or profession. "Fix your eye on some definite goal," is the counsel of the wise father or instructor. We give the same admonition in religious life. We urge men to decide what particular thing they can and will do for the church, and then apply every ounce of energy to its attainment. Thomas from that point of view was right.

But viewed from a deeper recess of faith he missed the Lord's glorious message. He did not understand that unseen realities were recognized by their visible symbols. He could know God only by knowing His manifested Son. There his criticism failed. And there criticism always fails. There the unrelenting critical attitude towards the Bible in late years has made its vital mistake. We do not refuse to submit the Book to historical tests. We glory in the fact that the Bible is a thoroughly human document, is the drama of innocence and tragic fall and mighty Redemption, is therefore nothing apart from its human constituents. You must have men with feeble hearts and cringing consciences, or you could never have the sacred Scripture. But the Bible has proved itself possessed of value attaching to no other book. Hence, while we gather inspiration from a knowledge of the times and moral forces at work when its actors lived, we must be at



pains to preserve the sacred element here only embodied, namely, the movement of God on human souls. We shall not idolize the Bible; we shall not wrap its pages in the impermeable asbestos of supersanctity and shut out all critical research. We require simply this, that men see and acknowledge the power of its truth. Then the inspiration of the Book will take care of itself!

A peculiar danger meets the man who uses the critical temper without restraint. He begins to regard it as a sure, an irresistible weapon of attack and an invulnerable shield against his opponents' arguments. It develops stubbornness in the soul, the last thing a man of reason ought to have and the very first thing that Jesus assailed in the religious attitude of His day. It is a simple matter to trace the moulding of a stubborn heart. Look at Thomas. When the Lord appeared to the disciples that first Sunday the man of critical mind was not there. Where was he? He should have been there, we exclaim. It was his business to cling to the enfeebled company and contribute his help, however little it might be. The fact was, Thomas did not see how Jesus could return again, indeed never gave a thought to its possibility, so contrary was such an event to the order of nature. Hence, no good reason appeared, why they should retain their organization. They might as well disband, mingle again in the avenues of accustomed service, and forget their heavy sorrow. This was not John's way to be sure, but it might well have been Thomas' decision. In that state of mind the belated disciple was when his friends greeted him with their mystifying announcement: "We have seen the Lord!" Seen the Lord? gotten a view of diaphanous spirit? ridden the clouds to the unriven



vault of heaven? Impossible! They had made a gross and inexcusable mistake. Their passion had run away with them. Their zeal had quenched forever all critical, dispassionate inspection of facts. The dead cannot arise, not even the enmiracled Lord. You may almost detect the settling of stubbornness in his mind. He will not believe; or, if he do believe, it must be on conditions which he deems absolutely impossible of verification. He must see the hands and touch the wounds.

My friend, we stand in mortal danger of emulating the unworthy example we have just studied. Obstinacy is not an isolated state. It did not cease with Thomas. It is not confined to boyhood. I have seen it in mature men. I have found it in the life-story of pronounced saints. It is not a Christian quality; it is the mere counterfeit of conscientiousness. Don't confound the two. To be stubborn in defense of a poor dogma or a pet method is not the same as unselfish devotion to truth. If you resign from office because you cannot have your way, think not that history will write you down as a man of strong character. Stubbornness, or as Dr. Alex. Whyte calls it, "mulishness," is not inscribed on the standards of Christian perfection. It is a blot on the escutcheon, not a mark of honor. Thomas would have lost his soul by it had the Saviour not come in gracious indulgence and granted him his wish. You may lose your place in the church and perhaps your seat in heaven by clinging tenaciously to what you call your "conscientious convictions." Remember Thomas and pulverize your pride, for that is the real name to this vice. Remember Thomas and be sure of this: that criticism pushed to the extreme becomes a mania, a disease, a moral disaster, and as Christian

disciples you can't afford to block influence and service by an uncompromising adherence to it.

## II

We turn the page and come upon Philip. He is more like the common run of mankind and hence does not irritate us so much by his foibles. We think we should not have asked his question, had *we* been seated at the Table. The words of Christ were plain enough for a child to grasp. His lips had breathed the soft zephyrs of heavenly love. Surely, God was in His person more than He had ever been in the person of a human creature. No, we could never have misapprehended the mystic letters of truth that Jesus bore in His life. But Philip did, and Philip deserved the rebuke administered by his Master. How the chastening notes of disappointment would have struck down deep into the soul of a responsive believer! This may be true. We may be more awake to the call of duty, more sensitized to the subtle turns of truth today, though I doubt it. But the simple fact was that Philip's mind was cast in the mould of practicality and he did not see at once the finer facts of revelation. He is not alone. He is the type of men who through the long ages of the world's history have sought a visible demonstration of truth. They do not distrust the deeper things; they simply cannot thread their way offhand into the mystery.

Philip was practical. Every item in his career furnishes proof. Let me collect the several incidents for you and invite you to measure them by this common denominator. Jesus called him to the ranks of discipleship and he accepted the call as a practical opportunity to cultivate the religious life his nation stood

for. His belief was what the man in the street could understand. It had two parts, first the promise of the ancient Scripture, and secondly, the exact fulfillment in the Prophet of Nazareth. You know, practical men are wont to set forth their business in statistical form, assets on one side, liabilities on the other. The thoroughgoing merchant can tell you precisely where he stands at the end of the fiscal year. The banking institution puts its affairs down in black and white, and is extremely careful to strike a correct balance. Every government that expects to escape bankruptcy must fix the budget of resources and expenditures and adhere to it. Philip had the business sense and developed it in his relations to the Lord and the apostolic company. He said to Nathaniel, Come and see. Not argument but visible contact is the rule of business success. When Jesus asked him how to feed the hungry host he calculated the cost and compared it with the contents of the collective purse. When the Greeks came in quest of the new Teacher he conferred with his friend Andrew as to ways and means for effecting this unheard-of interview. And lastly, when the sermon got too deep for his understanding, he exclaimed, with the same devotion to concrete facts: "Show us the Father, and that will be sufficient!"

The Practical man is frequently a safeguard to human society. He is always a conservative. He does not follow the phantasmagoric figures of a lively imagination. He believes in the logic of facts. He will stake the order of the present against the promise of future progress, because he knows and sees the former, but the latter is as yet an undetermined quantity. He is the man of experience. He generally has some years on his head. The tender youth is wrapped

in the visions of hope; the settled man of affairs rules by the wealth of acquired habits. In matters of finance he never takes a risk. He makes his investments in securities of acknowledged worth. In the stream of politics he stands for the policies now in vogue, and abhors the cunning schemes that visionaries devise, with which to tickle the public ear. He believes in making haste slowly. He throws the weight of his influence into the party that promises not to disturb the current method of business and social action. In the holy sphere of religion he seeks results. He cares for none of the subtleties of creed. He believes that a man should prove his creed by his deed; and if he can exhibit no deeds then his creed is worthless. He echoes with a kind of solemn glee the dictum of the Saviour, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." If you don't work your prayers out, he argues, you evacuate them of their power. The influence of the Philips in modern church life is large and to all seeming on the increase. It is they who stand behind the various "movements," that are common features to the ecclesiastical landscape at present; stand behind them with their money, and their time, and their energetic speech. They want to see Christianity objectified in the machinery of the church, in the network of missionary organizations, in the Brotherhoods and bands and multiplied forms of religious service. They must have God manifest in the busy hospital or find His marks in the bread-line of a great city. Otherwise, they cannot see Him at all. We rejoice in the serious consecration of such practical minds. We need them, now; need them as protest against the encroachments

of Mammon; need them as answer to the insinuation that the Christian faith is a piece of flabby sentiment and not an order for social development; need them to teach the wiseacres direct from college theorizing that all the sociology of modern life is not monopolized by the non-religious settlements in the heart of great cities. For these and other sufficient reasons we need great souls steeped in practical ideas,—Marthas cumbered with much serving, who have no time and little inclination to sit at the Master's feet and imbibe the simple truths of piety; Peters who having their own commission turn to the Johns and ask, What shall these men do? Yes, we need them, and divine opportunity is raising up a notable line of effective workers in His church.

But while we praise such devotion we must enter a word of caution. Philip's very practical sense became an avenue of danger. He could not see the Father without an ocular demonstration. Moses had such a vision; Isaiah was carried into the throne-room of the King; Zechariah marveled at the angelic ministries revealed to him. Could not Jesus bring the Father down to the level of their eyes? Mere spiritual vision was not enough; it was too deceptive; it was perhaps only an idea, with no basis in fact.

Well, the mistake of Philip is a common one. It proceeds on the assumption that theory is nothing and facts are everything. I can remember how we used to debate the relative value of the two in student days, and some of us caught by the ruling temper of the nation were inclined to put all stress on practice and little on the speculation that lay beneath, made, guided, and inspired all substantial progress in human life. We did not see then, as we discovered later, that



you cannot have practice without some kind of theory. Every great invention, every epochal discovery has its roots in a series of investigations marked by the test of theories,—the acceptance of some, and the rejection of others. The Roentgen rays did not spring suddenly into being in the laboratory of a German experimenter; they are the results of a long and arduous experimenting with the forces that make them so effective an instrument in modern science, especially Surgery. The two phases of the mind must go along hand in hand. Neither is of use without the other.

We must impress this thought on the social students of the present. There is and always has been a conflict between the so-called producing and non-producing classes of society, that is, those who work with their hands and those who work with their brains. In reality such a conflict does not exist. The two groups make up the one whole. Both we must have, or society goes instantly to pieces. But we are particularly interested in the matter as regards religious life. Creed and deed have contemporaneous and vital places in the hearts of believers. We hear the intermittent outcry against theology:—"Take it away; it has ever been a divisive element in the life of the church; it has set up persecuting schools, blocked the path of missionary effort, absorbed a multitude of powers that should have been turned into the channel of service. Not thought but life is the body of religion. We don't care what a man believes, so long as he does." Thus, the protest goes on, sometimes with bitterness, sometimes with good-natured scorn. But every once in a while the world gets a glimpse of the vacuity of deed without creed, when a man prolific in good works sinks into the waters of some annihilating sin; or, when some

religious movement usurping the name "Christian" proves by its deeds how far from the spirit and scope of Christianity it has withdrawn.

Thus the protest rings its changes in the ears of modern man and shall do so until the church loyal to her Lord and His truth rises to answer Philip's question, as He did: "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father!" Theology, in other words, is equivalent to Christ. If you despise the themes of Scripture you despise the heart of Him who gave them to the world. If you despise Him and refuse to see in Him the face of the Father, where, we ask, shall you ever look to get the vision of pardoning love and eternal Hope?

"I say, the acknowledgment of God in Christ,  
Accepted by the reason, solves for thee  
All questions in the earth, and out of it,  
And has so far advanced thee to be wise.  
Wouldst thou unprove this to re-prove the proved?  
In life's mere minute, with power to use that proof,  
Leave knowledge, and revert to how it sprung?  
Thou hast it; use it, and forthwith, or die!"

### III

The third query at the Table came from Judas, and it was so manifestly the opinion of all the men that we do not get any special light on the character of the asker. One thing that is said of him, however, must be mentioned. The Evangelist warns us against confusing him with the man of Kerioth who betrayed his Lord. Hence, negatively at least we get one line in the portrait: he was true to his Leader. He may have deserted Him in the hour of crisis but he did not sur-



render Him to the hands of sinners. It is sometimes a disadvantage to have the same name as a malefactor. That strange intangible mind which we call Public Opinion will link unconsciously name to man and do incredible injustice at times. On the other hand, it is a distinct benefit to the good man to have his virtues thrown into strong relief by the baseness of his namesake. How white the snow seems when seen by the black soil of earth! Judas, we are sure, lost nothing by the comparison.

But we derive a positive trait in the picture, too, by studying the question he put. "How has it come to pass, Lord, that thou wilt manifest thyself to us and not unto the world?" From his words we gather that Jesus formerly taught them His desire to get the news of pardon at once to the desolated heart of mankind. But a change has come over His mind; He tells them now that He will manifest Himself only to them, and the world must remain in its stupor of despair. Or, He had once assured them that He would follow the expected path of the Messiah; and now He disclaims any attempt at public exposition of His power; He is content to get Himself into their impressible spirits. I do not think that Judas had difficulty with the idea of manifestation; that would trouble Philip. What Judas did not perceive was this: how Jesus could be the promised Christ, and yet not assume the reins of government, unyoke Israel from her captors, restore the kingdom to her, fulfill piece by piece the covenants of Jehovah, and elevate Judah to the throne of political as well as spiritual supremacy over the world. This was the traditional view, and this view the disciples cherished until they saw the Lord take His ascent from Olivet. Then the final disillusion came,

the disillusion that received a sharp wrench beneath the Cross and by the Tomb. Then all the old expectations of Israel were declared to be crude and carnal as compared with the holy Kingship now revealed.

There is a traditional temper in the world that yields to progress only after the severest experience. We are impressed with its vigor. It protects the form long after the inward spirit is exhausted. For example, the people of England are today in some respects more democratic than we in this western world. And yet they almost never suggest that the royal family be displaced or rank be abolished or the government be made in name what it seems to be in fact, a representative republic. The goad of hoary tradition is felt. The "boast of heraldry, and the pomp of power" still hold undisputed sway on English soil. But it is in religion that tradition is strongest. Judging from our own feelings, we cannot wonder that the Jews viewed the spiritual interpretation of their covenant as dishonoring both to them and to their God. Therefore, they opposed Jesus. Nor can we wonder that the disciples persisted in misreading His message and even tried to make Him king in defiance of His word; and after Calvary bewailed their trust in One who seemed able to redeem Israel.

Tradition is hard to conquer. Opinions long cherished are surrendered only by a revolution of heart. It needs a flood of light; it needs profoundly more, it requires a new and captivating affection reaching down to the bottom of the soul, to release a man from the bonds of an unspiritual faith. Men do not like to alter their opinions; it seems like a confession of unmanliness. But after all an opinion is something we have conceived and not a truth fixed in the realms of

eternity. I have read that a venerated judge did not fear to change his opinion when solid argument convinced him of the correctness of another view. True manhood comes out there. It is not tenacity of belief but openness of mind that forms the basis of substantial faith and spiritual progress. Judas was wrong in holding to the idea of Messianic splendor. Christ did not intend to ride triumphantly up the Appian Way into the Forum and claim the Roman Eagles for his own. "My kingdom is not of this world."

We need to analyze the traditional temper that binds us. Every believer, every church is infected partially by the spirit. If the church does not adapt itself to changing conditions, if it refuses to meet the Macedonian call for service beyond the borders of the homeland, if it shuts its eyes to the miseries of slum and tenement, as not being the work of the church in the fathers' opinion and therefore not in ours, if it speaks in its worship the language of another century or in its creed the outworn terms of an old controversy, if it leaves to the public press the discussion of questions, that concern the moral life of the nation, on the ground that the Constitution separates church and state and prescribes the subjects proper to each, if it receives the gifts of wealthy philanthropists and utters no condemnation on the methods by which much of the wealth is procured, if it allows the education of its children to pass entirely out of its hands and over into the clock-work system of public institutions,—if, in a word, the church erects into an idolatry the memory of the Past, and will not meet the glorious opportunity of the Present, then we should look with keen scrutiny at the answer of Jesus to His Rabbinical disciple: "If a man loves me, he will keep my words."

The cure of all traditionalism is a passion for Christ. Wrong ideas though adorned with illustrious names find their solvent there. Misplaced emphasis is corrected at His touch. The only place to get the truly spiritual vision of life and service is at the feet of the Saviour. When you hear with Luther the voice of justification by faith and not by works, when you stand with Zinzendorf before the form of the crucified Christ, when with Livingstone you catch sight of the teeming multitudes of Africa, going down the road of utter despair, then all tradition is flung to the winds; then you behold the real pulsing, saving power of heaven; then you can repeat the flaming motto of Henry Martyn:—"Let me burn out for Christ."

Three spiritual moulds are cast in the persons of Thomas, Philip, and Jude. Do they symbolize your own? If so, I invite you to seize the gold in them and consume the alloy. Address your toil to the most glorious purpose conceived for mankind and by a mighty output of faith shape your own life after the holy pattern of the blessed Lord.

## IV

### THE DUPLICATE VISION

*John 14:9. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father,—and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?"*

THE faculty of sight is the greatest treasure of the human body. Without it space, saving that which may lie within the sweep of the hand, is eliminated. Without it the glorious colors that mingle in the belted arch of heaven convey no meaning to the mind. If the eye cannot see, to what purpose shall we rehearse the details of the picture, the rich background, the lights playing on tree and house, the shimmering stream, and the herd browsing lazily in the meadows? If sight be denied, how shall one paint in words so exquisitely the mother's face that its precious lineaments may shine lifelike and real in the soul of the child? What is more pathetic than a blind man's attempt to read the expression of his friend's face by passing his hand over its features?

I feel certain that Jesus gave to this sense the same superlative emphasis that we do; for He lived in a land where blindness came commonly from the piercing glare and the sifting sand. His gentle touch released many from this dread thralldom, and they looked up to His kindly eyes with waves of gratitude from the new-kindled light in their own. It is this fact which makes the words of the text glow with preternatural luster. We can see Christ the Man of

Nazareth girded with manly grace, and in Him we can detect the majesty of God who is revealed as the Father of :

## I

We are invited to inspect the Person of Jesus.

It is the settled judgment of science that sight proceeds along three successive paths. We shall follow them in our study of Him whom the text brings to our notice.

Sight, in the first place, consists in simple observation. The eye of the child begins with this just as soon as the orbit of vision is fixed. All inquiries as to natural order have their starting-point in the gathering of facts. If you wish to know the structure of the earth beneath its crust, you must open your eyes to see. You must observe the arrangement of the different strata, whether they lie one upon the other in regular sequence or have been acted on by some inward force which has twisted the layers out of shape, broken great masses of rock, and piled them up in chaotic masses in entire disregard of geometrical symmetry. This is the beginning of scientific knowledge. It is very different from the method of the famous French thinker, Buffon, who sat in his lofty study and constructed a world out of his own ingenious reasonings. We demand something simpler and at the same time more agreeable to the facts. He who will not work by the primary method of observation does not deserve a place in the workshop of true science.

We demand the same course in the sphere of religion. We insist that men must *see* in order to know. The Christian religion does not fear to square its



principles by the commonest rules of science. Jesus pursues this plan; He tells His disciples that they had seen Him, and seeing is the first portal to the hall of truth. What had they seen? What had fixed the intent gaze of their eye? We shall go with them to the Jordan valley and get with them the first look on Christ. John pointed Him out as a Stranger to the multitude, indeed a Stranger to him until the divine Spirit marvelously unsealed his eyes. John said that he, the forerunner, was not worthy to stoop down and loose the latchet of the Stranger's shoes. Finally, John exclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world!" "This is He of whom I spake; he that cometh after me is preferred before me, for he was before me." The young men from Galilee lifted up their eyes, as Leah and Rachel lifted them up when Jacob came. They looked and saw; saw what, saw whom? He was dressed as a citizen of that country, the simple garment over His shoulders and the sandals on His feet. He did not espouse the coarse clothing of the Baptist, for His mission was not as his. He did not eat the uncooked food of the desert, locust and wild honey; for His place was among men, not apart from their busy and careworn haunts. He appeared to be the counterpart of His fellows, and I have no doubt that primary fact pleased the fancy of His admirers. So they followed Him.

Now, a difference began to emerge; He did not walk precisely as they did. Their gaze became more penetrating and more detailed. Every man differs from his neighbor in his particular mannerism. You don't need to see the face of certain persons; you can tell who they are by the tilt of the figure, by the shrug of



the shoulders, by the swing of the body. I can imagine, they gave a watchful look to every movement of the Man who preceded them by a few paces. They wanted to see how He "carried himself," as the French say. Then, they saw Him turn about and wait for them to approach. It was a critical moment for the inquirers, though the significance of the meeting did not break on them at once. It might just be that as they neared this Person the glances grew hesitant, wavering, embarrassed. Why had they come at all? It is never fair to intrude on the privacy of another. Nor could they be at all sure from the word of the Preacher that the mission were worthy of the solemn pursuit of a Jew. But they kept on, entered His presence, sat down and talked with Him. The observation grows more exact; now they can note the features of His face, the Face that a host of inspired artists have tried to recover to their canvas,—all beauty that human flesh can congregate in one, all spiritual thought that ever blood and nerve could print on matter,—they saw it all in Jesus' face but knew nothing as yet of its eternal meaning. They had fulfilled the first element of the new religion,—they had seen the Lord!

We insist that men must see in order to know the truth. The gateway to faith is an appeal to the Person of the Christ. Nothing else will do. If you begin with the church you must tell what the church stands for and why it has a right to claim the suffrage of mankind. If you instance a sacrament as the initial step in faith you must read out the truth embodied there, or men will tell you, it is a bare piece of matter, bread that perishes, and a few drops of water that are spilled upon the ground. If you hold up a dog-

ma which the faithful have believed you will get answer that it is the excogitation of men's reason and not living truth. We must begin with a Person; we must set our minds to get a discreet and absorbing look at Him.

In order to do this we need the records of the past. Tradition that passes from mouth to mouth, doctrines that are communicated from one memory to another will not suffice. Even the sculptured form of a living master as enshrined in the sacred edifices of Buddhism palls upon the adoration of the ages. We must see the Face, we must hear the Voice of the Teacher. We must follow Him on errands of mercy, see His holy hand lifting up the accursed, feel His touch on fevered brow, on sightless eyes, on disjointed limbs. Where can we get so intimate a view of Him save in the Bible? Hence, to understand the "Fact of Christ" you must observe. Much of the listless, inert experience of the church is due to the absence of Bible vision. Would you know Christ better, then look, look, look at Him!

In the second place, sight brings identification. It is very difficult to identify an object by the faculty of touch. Did you ever try it? Go into a dark room, and attempt to pick out a small box among a number of objects of the same general shape. You would have to identify it by some particular break on the surface, and even then you might come out with a serious doubt in the mind. But the eye usually determines at once the identity of the thing. For this reason sight is a much more authoritative ground of evidence in court procedure than either touch or hearing. I am aware that the power of identification is not the same in all persons. Some eyes are sharp and sure; some minds behind the eyes arrive at a clearer decision. But taken

altogether we may hold that sight gives us the best basis for establishing the identity of a person. It did so in the experience of the disciples. When Jesus called them by the Lake of Galilee they recognized Him as the very Teacher whom John had recommended. When He came to them in the midnight storm, walking on the wind-driven sea, they were at first terrified lest an evil spirit were about to consume them but sank into repose at the sound of His voice and the sight of His face. And when, the resurrection past, the re-embodied Lord exposed His hands and side for their scrutiny then they rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

I need not cite further examples. It was not some remarkable power that caused them to retain so vivid an impression of the divine Person. Memory did it for them, and memory can do it for us. It is a plain, unvarnished fact that the Christ in the Gospels perpetuates Himself in the Acts of the church. The portrait is the same. The portrait has never changed from the day of Calvary to this day of grace. The power that He wielded in His Palestinian life is wielded now in His universal life, that is, His life in Europe, in America, in the islands of the sea. Then He awoke the sleeping forces of nature and commanded their obedience. Now He grips the dormant powers of the soul and ushers us into eternal life. Then He opened the blinded eyes whose living nerve had been cut. Now He tears off the blinding prejudices of the heart and unveils the heights of holiness. It is the same Christ, —only His Form is unseen and His message is now strictly spiritual. We are wonted to the change that takes place in a great man's career. Once, as with Milton, the arena of state is his field, and he argues

for freedom of thought with Herculean strokes. Then a shift in the scene uncurtains the quieter stage;—a man alone, sitting behind the thick darkness of closed eyes, but pouring out themes and thoughts and sublime tropes that have held the world under magic spell. Milton has not altered; the mighty vigor of his soul is unquenched. In the council-chamber or by the poet's table he is the Voice of honor and liberty and truth. My friend, you may not behold your Christ with seeing eyes now; but the march of His victorious standard is heard in the land, and the cross that supported His dying Frame once is now the herald of spiritual emancipation for the entire race of men.

The vision of the eye has a third function, viz., to incite the mind to reflection. We are not content to look on a man as we look on a stone. There is much to learn about the composition of a physical body, its inorganic elements, how they were gathered into this particular group, what place the stone has in the arrangement of all nature, and of what use it may be to civilized society. But when we come to the human person we get larger thoughts. We perceive an object that does not remain the same, that grows and grows by laws of its own. We catch the strain of purpose; we detect the setting of means to an end. We see the evidences of an inner impulse guided by none of the laws so familiar in the life of tree or horse. In other words, a Person steps out of the curtained recess into the presence of the observer. We need not speculate how Jesus the Christ unfolded His splendid powers of mind to the gaze of His disciples, nor how much they in their childlike faith understood. We have a thousand items to prove that He impressed them and the surging crowds as not another teacher

in His day did. "He spake with authority and not as the scribes; He spake as never man spake; we have seen strange things today," when the palsied man was healed;—and "no man durst ask Him any more questions." The intellectual power of the Lord was recognized.

The moral quality was recognized by His comrades, too. They knew that He differed here from His contemporaries by the width of heaven's span. When Peter saw the miraculous draught of fishes he was moved not so much by the exertion of power as by the holy character, which alone would have a right to receive such endowment. Even the unbelieving Jews could not restrain the exclamation: "How can a man, that is a sinner do such miracles?" Men got somewhere near the truth by the sight of wonders. But they could not then and cannot now reach the goal of perfect vision, until they see a soul changed from sin to safety by the overshadowing love of the Master. Then faith steps in and supplants sight, and the unshaded glory of Christ becomes our present possession.

I am constrained to believe that we need faith the "sixth sense" now. Religion may begin with sight, but it cannot end there. There is no scientific demonstration to the truth of a redeemed soul. You must experience redemption. Argument and precept, miracle and prophecy fulfilled are not food to the hungry soul. You must get Christ Himself, the dying Lord, the beneficial Sacrifice. You must get some taste of the mystic's piety; you must think your spirit into His; you must have Him for your Guest; you must walk with Him, and talk with Him, and think with Him. You will not press His sacred Person in holy fancy to your own, as St. Francis of Assisi did; so



that the wounds of Christ, men said, left their marks, inerasable Stigmata, on his hands and feet. But you will see Him so plainly, hear His commands so exactly, follow His steps so closely, as in time to make your friends think they stand in the very presence of the divine Saviour. That is the way to see Him. That is the way to reflect on Him.

“All my capacious powers can wish,  
In Thee doth richly meet;  
Not to mine eyes is light so dear,  
Nor friendship half so sweet.”

## II

We have now caught the vision of Christ; but the vision is duplicate:—“He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.” It is an astounding affirmation, falling from the lips of a man. Either he who makes it is deranged or he must have some good grounds for making it. The whole life of Jesus testifies to His sanity. No man ever faced the profound truths of religion more deliberately than He. No man ever handled them more deftly. And no man was ever so free from logical devices to obscure the terms in debate. Moreover, no race resisted so resolutely as His own every attempt to bring God down to the level of the earth. We are warranted, therefore, in giving strict attention to the words as Jesus used them. “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father” can mean generically but one thing, that between God and Him there existed a correspondence not found between God and other human beings. It is our business to unravel the mystery, so far as the sublime sentiment permits.

The words may denote Resemblance,—Christ re-

sembles God in certain qualities, qualities of spirit, of course, for Deity possesses no physical parts. Greek and Hebrew are at one in that. Such resemblance is not strange in common life. "How much he looks like his father!" You stop to scrutinize the young man's person. Yes, he walks with the same gait, swings his arms, holds his head, moves his body, just exactly as the older man. The contour of face is singularly like, too; there is the bold forehead, the aquiline nose, the square, strong chin. Then, you ask about the mental traits and find a similarity there. The father has a determined way of taking hold of any subject, and his son unconsciously exhibits the same. Four men of national reputation from one parsonage in the Berkshires,—the father a minister of high intelligence, strong will, great power of persuasion in speech, and deep piety; and each son carrying his share of resemblance to that honored father into his own avenue of service,—that is nature's answer to the problem of heredity. In a certain sense it might be true to say, he that hath seen Dudley, Stephen, Cyrus, or Henry Field, hath seen their father David.

I shall not press this argument too far, for it has its perils. And yet all agree that looking from the condition of manhood the most striking element in the life of Jesus is its utter sinlessness. And what nearer approach can one make to God? More than that; if sinlessness be an actual fact in Christ's life, must we not ask, if there be not some other item that removes Him from a possible classification with men? For, no other instance is on record—granting the sinlessness exists—no other instance is on record of a human life unstained by actual sin or unshadowed by possible sin. And going further, no other case is known where abso-



lute freedom from the hint of sin or the suspicion of remorse enters as a distinct and unqualified experience of the mind. Ullmann contends that even the *idea* of untempered holiness never entered the consciousness of the heathen world, and they certainly never constructed a figure for which the most primary claim of sinlessness was made. But, here is the idea perfectly realized in a historic Person, to whose faultless life even His enemies had to bear witness. Not only is His life free from sin, which is a negative state, but He is also governed by the only supreme profusion of love known to the world, which is the positive quickening of character by the highest power of the divine Mind. If Christ be all this, may we not say, He is like God in some glorious sense, which is not even hinted at in any human resemblances?

Again, the words of Christ may mean that He came to represent God, and thus "he that hath seen me hath seen the Father." He often spoke of being sent by God as an ambassador is sent by the King. It is correct to say that when you see the legate you see the prince; but after all it is correct only by a figure of speech. The actual person of the prince may be ten thousand miles away. The King of England might have remained in his palace at London and his minister of state might have received the imperial crown at the hands of the Indian people. He would have been truly crowned, because the Person of the sovereign is for the time in thought substituted for the person of his messenger. But setting aside the lack of reality in the figure it is clear that Jesus possessed and exercised certain rights that belonged to divinity. No one, for example, none but Jesus ever essayed to forgive sins in his own name. "Jesus Christ maketh thee whole," is

the dictum of Peter. "I say by the grace given unto me," is the manner of St. Paul. But Jesus said, "I say unto thee, Thy sins be forgiven thee." "The son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins." I don't wonder that the assembled Rabbis were shocked and alarmed at this apparently blasphemous talk. They had kept their skirts impeccably clean, and now should they permit this intruder to traduce the sanctity of their law?

The point is just this: How far did Jesus' authority extend? If He simply represented God would He be justified in using the first personal pronoun in His discourses? Could He handle so delicate a subject without a reference to His Sovereign's desires? Could He say with any shade of truth that He had authority in heaven and earth, and that He commissioned His disciples to preach Him as a saving Lord? If He does so then He usurps the place of the Sovereign and grasps the scepter in His own hands. Yet this very thing Jesus does, and in our heart of hearts we do not resent His words. Why? Tell me, ye who have soothed your aching hearts in His embrace; tell me, ye who have sat down at His feet and heard the words sweeter, gentler, more searching than ever tongue of man uttered; tell me, ye who have left home and friends and bounded the confines of the earth with your labors—why have ye accepted Him, if not, because ye believed Him to be incarnate God and not a prophetic emissary of the throne!

Look again: the union of Christ with God is something more than we have yet suggested. The terms of the verse are not satisfied with either interpretation, helpful and stimulating as they are. We are bound to seek a closer union, but just how it may be defined

in human speech, who can tell? "I and my Father are one,"—does that subtend a metaphysical oneness which seems to mean that two persons are subtly mixed in one indiscoverable Being? I do not know. Who does know? It is easy to call in analogies to aid us. The oak is present in the acorn, and thus Christ's deity is in His earthly Person. The ray of the sun is a part of the sun itself, and he who sees the ray has no need to search for the sun; he knows it is somewhere in the firmament. Hence the ray and the sun are the same. But how far have we advanced the frontier of religious faith? Of what use, I ask, are the piled-up phrases of the Nicene Creed in framing an idea of the divine Christ—

"Born of the Father, of one nature with Him; that is, of the substance of God,—God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten not made"?

He Himself seems to be lost in the labyrinth of words. Certainly the tender Saviour withdraws into impersonal abstraction at the touch of so mystifying an article.

We demand something with the breath of life in it, and this we get in the noble comparison He always uses, *Father*,—"he that hath seen me hath seen the Father." Let us remember that the words of Jesus are spoken of His earthly state. Did He intend us to suppose, that when He departed and the Spirit came, His own personal existence was at an end? Have we mistaken in emphasizing the supermundane personality of Christ, when we should have put all emphasis on God, who is manifest by His Spirit's presence? There is food for thought, here. It cannot be that the unity of God is today broken up into three distinct pieces,

each with its peculiar office. Were that true we should have Tritheism, and the aspersions of the Moslem would have only too much truth. But our Trinity cannot mean that. We stand, in this age, for a seamless Deity, whose wondrous love was expressed most perfectly in the Person of the earthly Jesus. We are led to believe that the relation of Jesus to God was that of Son to Father, and that He carried out His office with the most scrupulous care. Indeed, you cannot understand Jesus' place in the Trinity apart from this relation. It is that relation which He adduces in our present verse:—"he that hath seen me the Son hath seen God the Father." That is the sense of the language, that and nothing more.

Examine it for a moment. The office of the father in the Jewish household was one of authority; the office of the son was that of obedience. You can tell what the nature of the father is by the actions of the son. Love issuing from the father's heart reverberates in the son's. Quiet sympathy, a spirit of helpfulness tend to build up the boy's character and develop the best traits of manhood. If authority requires discipline to be administered, it is administered. There is no complaint from the son and no hesitation with the father. The life of both is complementary; one cannot subsist without the other. Jesus says, Whoever observes the exact obedience with which he submits to the Father's commands, will see the highest fulfillment of the divine law and the finest portrayal of divine love.

Have we seen the Face of God in the face of Jesus? It is unspeakably difficult to get that look. Do what we will, the vision presents two objects still to our view. Something hinders us from seeing their essential unity. Did you ever try the experiment of

holding two pencils vertically before your eye, one behind the other, with a white surface for background? If you fix your eyes on the first pencil, the farther one will appear double, and vice versa. Something diverts the look, and each eye gets its own impressions. The case is parallel. If instead of looking immediately at God, you look at some feeble image you have conceived of what He ought to be, then the Son is severed from His Father, and you can never get them together. But if you center your faith on the indissoluble unity of the Godhead, then the Trinity becomes the medium of divine expression, modes of action, channels of priceless love to a waiting world.

Let no man suffer his vision to rest till through Christ it pierces to the heart of God!

## V.

### THE GENESIS OF TRUTH

*John 14:10. "The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself."*

JESUS came into the world as the witness to truth. He was in His public life primarily a Teacher, and the serious impression He made on penetrating minds was that His teaching bodied forth elements of truth beyond the ken of ordinary observers. Popular fancy was caught by His mastery of disease, His skillful dealing with occult powers, and His assertion of a right to rule the wind and wave. The miracle paved the road to temporary success. But every mighty work was after all a sign, the outward form to a hidden principle, a sacrament whose terms revealed the god-like wisdom of its Doer.

With Truth, therefore, Jesus had to do. What truth? whose truth? His own or that of a superior Mind? We are at times confused by the apparent contradiction in His language. Now He takes all credit, so to speak, to Himself. "Ye have heard how it hath been said by them of old time . . . but I say unto you." "He that heareth my words"; "heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." The ring of personal assurance is heard. On the other hand, He turns to the Father in heaven and ascribes all truth to Him. He is the willing, almost passive medium for the transmission of divine thoughts to men. Which of these is the correct view of the



Galilean Prophet? Well, both are true and together frame the eternal picture of the Holy Son. Here we emphasize the second, which traces every majestic truth back to its source in the heart of God.

Two supplementary themes meet us in the text:

1. The characteristics of the words of Jesus; and
2. Their heavenly origin.

# I

We have in our educational code a double test to which the instructor must submit, ere he stands accepted by his judges. He must first know something worth while to teach, and secondly, he must have the ability to impart that knowledge. Jesus satisfied both qualifications and may be regarded as the Preceptor Maximus in the history of our race. We are at present concerned with His message and proceed to analyze its salient features.

We are struck at once with the note of authority that sounds in every sentence. The men who heard Him in His initial sermon formed the same opinion. That opinion settled into a definite judgment, as soon as He had delivered the memorable address on the mountainside. Then they knew that a "prophet had arisen" in Judah. He was possessed with His subject; He was familiar with its minutest details; He could grasp the most obscure and difficult portion of the ancient Law and shed a convincing light upon its page. The scribes could do this in some measure too. Yet they were certainly not like this new Preacher. The difference was acutely felt. Men went home from the reading of the sacred Books, glad to escape from the hum of droning voices and the smell of musty parchment. But they left the base of the Galilean hill

with eye aflame and pulses stirred, with heart beating loudly and the conscience wakened from a long sleep. They had heard strange things that day. Up to Hattin's summit they had climbed to spend a lazy afternoon in curious attention; they came away asking whence this man was, and what was the meaning of his words.

Yes, the difference between Jesus and the wisest scribe was like a chasm, deep, deep, deep,—as though it could not be bridged. And it never could be bridged; it was the difference between finitude and the Infinite. At length they pitched on its terms; they discovered why Jesus' words gripped them and the teachings of their official leaders did not. Christ spoke with authority and the scribes with a slavish adherence to text. Who can ever get the swing, the charge, the grand exhilaration of truth, if he must rigidly regard every letter, every point, and every inflection in the sentence; if he must be incessantly careful lest his interpretation of the thought should differ even infinitesimally from the exposition of some famous teacher? The curse of much Bible study is felt just here. We dare not read the precious verses into our heart's flesh, until we have seen how they fit into the statements of creed or received opinion. Jesus had no such scruples; He brushed aside the web of mystifying traditions and breathed on the text the inspiration of His own mind. Hence, His message leaped like a tongue of fire into the soul of His hearer. He conquered prejudice and disarmed criticism by sheer weight of ideas.

And what were those ideas? For if the Lord's method of dealing with truth differed from the scribes', certainly the results of His interpretation were

radically opposed. He brought forth elements that had lain for centuries unhonored and alone. Many of these were distasteful to the religious teachers of that day, and they had deliberately turned their faces away. Jesus, however, knew them to be essential to the saving of the soul. Therefore, He uncovered them and in fascinating parable and sententious saying drove them home to the heart of the people. He spoke of judgment, and He meant that the divine Hand must execute the rigors of eternal laws without let or hindrance. Over against this He spoke of mercy, and He let the penitent sinner have a look into the gracious heart of God. Then He lifted up His own Person and gathered about it all the prophetic utterances of the past, all the types of the ceremonial system, all the hopes of Israel and the dumb, unspoken yearnings of the world; and standing before astonished Jerusalem exclaimed: "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." No mistake in such language! The speaker is not another Isaiah with a wealth of promise to prostrate Judah; not a Moses, with the charm of the new law in his hands; this Man who speaks with unchallenged authority has kinship with the unopened heavens. His message stills the voice of objection into silence.

The attitude of Jesus is a direct challenge to His church. We need the note of authority just now. In some quarters it has been lost or forgotten or neglected. Whatever numbness is felt in the body of the church is due to the lack of assurance. We must re-introduce the note into our private life and our public worship. We must repeat the words of the Saviour, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save," and clinch them by belief in their positive certainty. The authority must be seated in his word.

Any other kind of authority is empty. If you put it in your priesthood you only create a social hierarchy that will on occasion burn men at the stake or excommunicate them from the blessings of eternity. Such authority is for pagan societies, not for those touched by the Christian ideal. Nor can your authority be of the document as such, the appeal to a subtly inspired Book, which must be held in most rigorous esteem and never "added to or taken from." The result is always a legalistic religion from which the spirit has fled in affright. Your authority can only be the living word of Jesus; the church must rest upon that. We must preach that, preach it now, preach it with new and conquering energy. We have no place, the world has no place for an invertebrate faith. If you are going to take the spine out of religion, take the carcass, too!

We are impressed, once more, with the element of conviction in Jesus' teaching. He intended to do more than announce His rights; He meant to make men acknowledge them. There have been teachers who did not teach but only thought. They had no care to persuade others; let them work out the scheme of truth, and that was enough. Others might adopt and send it broadcast over the earth,—if they chose. They were bent on seeing the matter through to its legitimate goal. Christ came not alone to produce truth but to produce men who obeyed the truth. He made His appeal to the intellect and to the conscience, the two supreme forces in the human breast. When men get within the magnetic field of His influence they must not go away unchanged. And they did not go away unchanged under the spell of His preaching.

Observe how He fed the mind with great and commanding truths. It is a grave mistake to suppose that His words drew simply the unlearned or the emotional to His auditory. His ministry was remarkable, just because it exerted its charm over every grade of mental development. I am citing now the men of recognized intellectual attainments, those who were clad in the fringed robes of the school, those who bore rule in church and state, and again those quiet folk in the heart of every village who untaught in the devices of the school yet knew by heart the promises of the ancient Scriptures and looked for the coming of Messiah. These were minds of power, and infant food would not satisfy them. Jesus taught them the "great things of the law." He took, for instance, the idea of a kingdom, which had hitherto meant a sweep of earthly power for the Jewish nation, and transformed it into the Kingdom of God. How clear, how incisive, how broad-minded those parables are! It is the dream of a statesman that is here detailed. It is the picture of a naturalist, who watching intently the process of growth gives to spirit as well as matter the true laws by which perfection shall be won. Surely this message is not to children only; it is meat for the grown man.

Or, study the profounder discussions of the Fourth Gospel. The sermon on the Bread of Life has excited more intellectual interest than the most intricate problems of your Athenian masters. No man can understand it by a casual reading. No, say not that it comes naturally from the miraculous increase of bread across the Lake. It gets its text there; but how often in sermons, whether preached from pulpit or press, the text is the main, perhaps the only thing we can



carry away. Follow the discourse of the Saviour, as He first bids them to beware of seeking carnal blessings and forgetting the ideals of the soul; as He unfolds the meaning of Manna which never had its truth fully told till He came, who was the "true bread"; as He depicts the saving quality of this bread and its grip on eternity,—until the disciples exclaimed in despair of understanding it, "This is a hard saying; who can hear it?" Of course it is hard saying; so is every word that has the elements of eternal truth in its texture. It is directed to the matured mind of the race. It echoes the challenge of Christianity to the world. We deal not with the trivial schemes that occupy other religions or the emasculated forms of our own. We are not concerned with beauty of ritual, the odor of incense, the subdued lights of the windows, or the transmission of sacramental virtue. We are concerned with the deep truths of religious faith, for which no minds are too strong and, thanks to divine wisdom, none too weak. We are concerned with instructing the intellect of the race. We are determined to make Christian men, the progressive, original, influential citizens of the nation. No other religion has such nutritious food for the soul as this. Hence, we demand that Christ's words should get a candid hearing in the councils of earth.

Observe, also, how Jesus wrought on the conscience of His auditors. He drove some to penitence and others He drove to unrelenting hatred. The purpose of His words was to show up the heart. He cared nothing for the frills of religiosity with which some had adorned their persons. Nor did He regard the disrepute which, deserved or not, the community has set upon the offender. He went to Zaccheus, dined at his



home, unveiled as with a surgeon's probe the unscrupulous, hard, covetous fiber of his soul, and extracted from him that memorable reply: "Lord, if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold." That is the plunge of truth into conscience. He stood undaunted before the haughty Pharisees, the saints of that day, and opened to the public eye the catalogue of their sins. He broke into their whited sepulchers and showed the dead bones of dishonesty and cruel oppression to widow and orphan. Would that the Saviour's word might today pierce the armor which cunning and deceit have forged upon many a soul! What revelations to the family, to the business circle, to the church! If such be needed then we pray for the sword of the Spirit, that its glistening blade may fall even upon our own consciences and cut off the silken shimmer of pretended virtue and the shreds of piety, leaving us naked to the infilling of divine truth.

I note one further filament in the words of Jesus, namely, their graciousness. His first public address bore this character, and it was woven like a golden thread through all His teaching. The contrast with the other teachers of the times was indescribable. They were proud, and exclusive; they held that men who had no learned acquaintance with the law were not better than the brutes. A favorite dictum was: "This people which know not the law are accursed." How then could they stand as leaders in religious thought? It is the same feeling that shadows the steps of the Jewish nation, today; only now it is turned against them. Now, Russia and France hurl all the contemptuous epithets in their lexicon at the unoffending Hebrew and regard him as beyond the

pale of redemption. The Master's way was otherwise. He had love and peace for everyone, high or low, despised or favored, slave or free; all were men to Him, all possessed the most priceless jewel on earth, an immortal soul. To Mary the Magdalen outcast He offered pardon; to Judas who was about to sell his Lord He handed the morsel of meat, in itself an opportunity for repentance; to the dying thief with a blackened past and no hope for the future He unbarred the gates of Paradise. This is Grace writ large, flaming in coruscating letters of invitation over the whole wide world. This is mercy such as no other religious creed can boast. There is no mercy in the hard creed of Buddha,—a thousand Karmas, or reincarnations, ere the soulless Nirvana is reached. There is no mercy in Mahomet's faith, where the Koran and the Sword stand as hideous alternatives. The words of Christ melt with glorious love. The icy depths of sin yield to their cheery touch. Jesus administers the comforts of forgiveness to crushed hearts. What unspeakable favor is His! "And all bare Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth."

## II

We take up the second, and main theme of the text, and ask, How are the words of Jesus in very fact the words of God?

It is a matter of record that men have claimed to utter the words of God and have been proven deceivers or self-deluded. Hardly a year passes but what some new sect appears to pose as the medium of divine wisdom, and thus to prey on the credulity and purses of their victims. We must remember, therefore, how

easy it is to make a pretense of speaking the words of God. Such a course is avowedly one resorted to by less enlightened humanity. The stronger minds take one of two other courses; either they depend on tradition as the source of truth, or else they seek justification at the bar of their own reason. The one is the custom of jurists, the other of philosophers. The jurist seeks no new principle in deciding a case; he discovers the facts and applies the code as already formulated. The philosopher, on the other hand, recognizes no truth as fixed; he insists on going over the whole ground of reality and making up his mind for himself. Every religious teacher has this option if he cares to take it. Jesus Himself might have followed the mode of His contemporaries and interpreted the sacred books literally. Or He might have done what Philo and other Jews in Alexandria were doing,—make those books square with the deductions of Greek philosophy. He did neither; He could do neither. He came not to say what Moses had said and certainly not what Socrates had said. He came to say what God said. In other words, He carried the stream of Truth back to its source; or reversing the order He opened the infinite reservoirs to let the torrents of truth rush unchecked into the consciousness of the world.

Well, the mission of our Lord included the uttering of the holy Oracles. "The Father which sent me gave me commandment, what I should say and what I should speak." His understanding of the origin of His language is very exact. You cannot mistake the tone, here. There are times perhaps when His doctrine is too profound to admit of clear statement. "I and my Father are one,"—you may speculate for a thou-

sand years and never reach the rim of the truth here imbedded. But the fact is otherwise in His present report. We get at the meaning because the Bible abounds in striking precedents for the statement. Every prophet speaking out of the certainty of experience is led to exclaim: "Thus saith the Lord." Jeremiah, a man of great intellect, a serious man of affairs, a wise councillor, and as brave a protagonist of truth as ever spoke,—Jeremiah says: "The Lord touched my mouth . . . and said unto me, Behold I have put my words in thy mouth." The mission of the prophet requires that he should bear the divine will to earth. The mission of Christ is the same but on a more gigantic scale. He comes as the Son of God, not simply as His representative. Listen to the opinion found in the works of a great philosopher, not a Christian:—"Of him, that is, Christ, I hold, that we are able to judge that he perceived things immediately, adequately, truly; for Christ, though he also appears to have enunciated laws in the name of God, as did the prophets, was not so much a prophet, as he was the mouth of God." (Spinoza.) He comes, then, as the ambassador from the court of heaven, to convey the wishes of the Holy Lord. Not long since, the Chinese forces, Imperial and Revolutionary, held a conference at Shanghai and agreed to summon a council for the empire, to determine what form of government should be erected after the abdication of the Manchu dynasty. The latter pronounced for a Republic. The Imperial delegate voted to the same effect. On his return to Peking he was at once cashiered, on the ground that he had gone beyond his instructions. The Sovereign's words are bound to be repeated in whole or penalty ensues. Jesus stood thus for God and spoke His words.

Again, there was a more intimate sense in which He repeated divine truth. You have noticed how a child reproduces the inflection of voice, the gestures, the very sentences of a parent,—sometimes to the latter's discomfiture. In that charming tale of childhood, "Little Lord Fauntleroy," the author depicts the naïve confidence of the boy in his grim and cross-grained old grandfather. He repeats the words and tones of the unworthy example and declares before the tenantry his desire to be just like the detested earl on his attaining manhood. The imitative faculty of the child is never at rest. With that divine and holy Father before His eyes, our Lord by His very nature had to reflect the truth of God. His words would have been false and out of joint, had they assumed any form save that of repetition. He could with no affectation declare: "The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself."

But how, we ask, can Christ or any of the prophets bring the word of God to men's ears? What right have we to hold that a Revelation is possible? I am asking now a hard question, and the wisdom and faith of many ages have been lavished on the answer. I believe that God has spoken to the world, you believe it, the church holds it as fundamental truth. There are vast companies of men who deny it and laugh at us for our unreasoned faith. But is this faith unreasoned? We know how sound is transmitted, and how you can hear your friend's voice three thousand miles away. Science has recently taught us to send magnetic currents across oceans without the guiding wire. The wireless station will catch the waves of energy, discharged from the instrument on the other shore. Fancy almost recoils at the wonder of the new dis-



covery. But the explanation is very simple after all; it is this: "Like answers unto like." I maintain that Revelation is possible, because God's spirit and man's spirit are charged with the same energy and made of the same stuff and respond to the same truth. I maintain that man is created in the image of God and that if you can communicate with another soul made in the same mould, there is not the slightest reason why you should not hear the angels sing, and feel the surge of gracious love in the words of the beloved Son. I know that from the viewpoint of science the soul as a spiritual essence is nothing but an assumption. But the contrary idea is an assumption too that there is no real personality but only streams of consciousness coming together, and making us think that we are men!

God can reveal Himself; He can and does find kindred spirits to whom He communicates His truth. But now we inquire, Why should God reveal Himself in His Son? Why was not the long line of courageous and inspired prophets enough to make men sure of His interest in them? It is here that we uncover the supreme purpose of Jesus' life. He would tell enough of God's words to insure safety for these spirits, from whose faces the image of God had been well-nigh erased by their sin; and He would seal His testimony with blood. What must He tell? Will a few words be sufficient? Will He utter some Delphic oracle and then retire into the shadow of the temple? For an answer, study the circle of His teachings. It *is* a circle; it stands for completeness. Nothing that is needed to make redemption a Fact is omitted. The human mind has often attempted to compass the firmament of truth. Milton will record in entrancing strophes the fall of



man and his recovery. Herbert Spencer will seek to bind into a synthetic philosophy all phases of human knowledge, but even before his death will find his fatiguing work relegated to the topmost shelf. Christ is not concerned with putting the universe into shape. He has a single aim, to save men from their sins. To accomplish it He must teach two things, the doctrine of man and the doctrine of God. The one is fully detailed in the first three Gospels, the second in the Gospel of the beloved disciple. Redemption has two phases, a life to be lived on earth and the cultivation of the eternal hope. The Christian life is made up of two parts, faith and works. All these elements are taught by Jesus so carefully, so concisely, in such persuasive language that we wonder how any hearer could have gone away unsatisfied. And yet suppose He should stand before you at this moment in the humble garments of earth, and say to you what He said to the Jews, would you accept His words at their face value and bow down at once and worship? You have more, a thousand times more than the original hearers had; you have the entire body of truth interpreted by His death, His resurrection, and the long experience of the church. If you cannot and will not accept the heavenly origin of His message under such circumstances, I fear that Christ will remain for you simply the Galilean teacher, the citizen of Nazareth, and nothing more.

Finally, words get a guaranty from the character of him who utters them. A man of dishonest life, try he never so hard, will not succeed in dropping pearls of truth from his lips. The pious heart does not, save in a fit of momentary aberration, express itself in profane speech. Words and works are tied together;

they are the joint output of character. Turning to the Lord we ask how these heavenly doctrines accord with His life. The answer is unmistakable; there is no blemish there. He moves among His associates without soil. To His challenge, "Which of you convicteth me of sin?" He receives no answer. This is He who is chosen to be the vehicle of God's truth. Isaiah was impure of lip and dwelt among a people of impure lips. Paul boiled over with indignation at a young man's desertion, and allowed the uncharitable word to escape. John, quiet, considerate, gentle John, raged at the Samaritans' rejection of his Master and desired to call down fire and consume them. But Jesus' words like His nature breathed the spirit of divine peace, and communicated the elixir of divine life. Well might He be called by His dearest friend the Word of God. "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

To many millions of souls since John's day the words of Jesus have been their most precious legacies. They have studied them in secret and through them found their way to the heart of God. They have taught them by the wayside and heralded them from the housetop. They have carried them to the uttermost part of the earth. They have read them on the field of victory and in the lonely vale of sorrow. They have sought direction from their counsels in the hour of great perplexity and found substantial guidance. They have brought them to the home of bereaved friends and ministered sweet and abiding comfort from the sacred sentences. They have laid these words under their dying pillow and slept peacefully away the life of care.

In the quiet chamber of the hospital attendants

found the saint of God sitting in his bed, the New Testament open before him. His eyes would never see again the sacred page, nor the lips speak again the gracious syllables. But these were the words he must have read, ere he met his Lord :

“In my Father’s house are many mansions;  
If it were not so, I would have told you;  
I go to prepare a place for you;  
And if I go and prepare a place for you,  
I will come again and receive you unto myself;  
That where I am, there ye may be also.”

## VI

### THE LAST RESORT OF FAITH

*John 14:11. "Or else believe me for the very works' sake."*

THE words have a note of discouragement in them. Jesus had trained His pupils for three busy years in the arts of faith, and now at the moment of their graduation found them unequal to the simplest spiritual exercise. Every teacher knows the keen edge of disappointment when the promise of success bitterly fails. The months and years of preparation we say must surely bear fruit. It is incredible that the dullest mind shall not somehow be infected by the charm and judicious handling of the expert Instructor. In spite of themselves, in spite of early environment, of spiritless tradition, and of countering winds of opinion they must believe Him on His word. In school with Christ, at the feet of the world's greatest Master, and yet not bound to Him by an infrangible chain of Faith! "Unthinkable," we exclaim, with the sweep of our full-grown consciousness; "truly, they are blinded by a bigotry worse than pagan."

But wait a moment; Jesus was not in a hurry. He knew that few minds rise by a sudden swift ascent to the summits of grace. The man who lagged behind was not for that reason to be ignored. Perhaps, the soul that came slowly, with halting steps, with groping hand would reach a loftier pinnacle in the long run. At any rate He made a place for three kinds of spiritual assent in His kingdom. You must fit in with one of

these, and perhaps in time you may cover all of them successively.

The noblest phase of faith is that which looks into the heart of the Lord and reposes there. It is shaped and turned by an intuition. It is the purest, most untrammelled state, that the human heart ever reaches. Its breath is the rare zephyr of an Alpine crest. Its light is kindled by the rising sun of the eternal *Morrow*. No discontent of earth sheds a dimming shadow over its path. No neuralgic gust of despondency chills the warm peace that broods over an accepted and approved fidelity. John on the bosom of his Lord is a singularly strong example of the insight of Faith. John could not construe the terms, but John knew that this present Jesus was in the Father and the Father in Him. On Patmos, he crept up the foothills of knowledge and got a nearer glimpse,—the Son who had sat down with His Father on His throne. In later days at Ephesus he caught the consummating vision,—the Word, that was in the beginning with God, and was God! Many like John and since his day have bathed their hearts in the glow of such faith. Multitudes to-day are girding themselves for the arduous ascent. You may join them. The sharp Matterhorn of faith points its sun-kissed head to the skies and invites you to come.

A lower register is sounded in the acceptance of truth. Truth, you know, meets the mind in the form of a statement. It carries its own validity with it. It cannot be anything but what it is. You would not stop to demonstrate a truth, for you regard its terms as final. When I say that two and two make four I should shrug my shoulders with impatience at a man who asked me, *Why?* What else can they make?

Did you ever find an instance when they added up to five? Could you conceive of any combination of circumstances where they would make anything but four? This sum is not affected by temperature nor by the rotation of the earth on its axis nor by the curvature of the surface of the earth. This sum is not affected by the bodily ills of the man who makes it nor by any mental derangement. Its truth is fixed. Science, too, has some truths or facts that are not axioms and yet commend themselves to the mind as sure. For example, the heliocentric theory of our system is to us absolutely sure. Who would stand now with old Ptolemy of Egypt and argue for the central position of the earth? The theory proves itself, so lucent and convincing are its factors. That is the basic idea of Truth. I am not conscious of a gap in thought when I apply the same definition of truth to religion. The word was not unfamiliar to Jesus. Indeed, if we follow John's record we meet it virtually in every chapter. Truth was atmospheric with the Speaker of these last discourses. He lived it, He breathed it, He exhaled it from His person. Truth, then, was the certain deposit of revelation to His church.

But truth can come to the mind only in the form of a statement about something. The first attitude of the mind is critical. You must learn what this thing is that goes by the name of truth. You must study the means of its transmission, ask how God could move so powerfully on human hearts as to secrete His truth there, and then move on them again so mightily that they could utter His truth in current speech. You must further take apart the several elements of truth; unfold the essence of the moral law; pursue the development of the chosen people; bend your ear to



the indictment of sin by prophetic indignation; scrutinize the austere face of the Ascetic who preaches and baptizes by the Jordan; turn with him to the new Prophet, hear, see, converse with Jesus for a term of years; stand before the blood-swathed cross, at the broken tomb, on Olivet's brow as He ascends; and then live in the empowered church for two generations, till the last word of inspiration is written;—you must do all this, ere you will be ready to weigh the syllables of truth and give an intellectual judgment.

But that is not the end. Truth, as here detailed, has a sting to it. It is not like the truth of science,—accept it or not as you please, since belief does not change conditions of life. The future is wrapped up for you in this judgment. Ideals of character hang on your decision. To believe is to get a lien on heaven; to reject is to tie your interests to earth. It is extremely necessary that we form correct views of Christ. I do not speak of elaborate creeds, woven by the arts of logic and rhetoric expression. These have served a useful purpose in the world. What we need is not truth on paper but truth burned into the heart. “Ye shall know the truth,” exclaimed the Teacher, the truth He taught, the truth about Him, the truth that never could be rescinded or extinguished. This is the next level of faith; and while it does not rise to the height of the former it plants a firm stepping-stone up to union with the Lord. If the disciples had only seized the truth, they would have been saved the wretched hours of despair after the tomb shut the precious remains out of their sight.

The lowest form of Faith next awaits our attention, and this we study at some length. I, for one, wish the Saviour had not been forced to admit it into His classi-

fication. But it is there, just because it is here. Jesus does not deal with humankind in an idealized state. He takes us as we are. He does not apply some cut-and-dried method; He adapts the method to the soul. You might have thought that Thomas would respond with unwincing faith to the representation of his comrades, "We have seen the Lord." But no! Human nature reigns and particularly Thomas' brand of human nature. Believe on such a shadowy basis the abnormal fact of a resurrection? Never! He demands a better proof than the possibly mistaken perception of his friends. He asks for the "works," the very condition that Jesus had forestalled in this lowest form of faith. He gets his demand. Jesus did not chide him; Jesus did not taunt him with disloyalty or suspicious distrust. He only invited him to do the thing he himself had required. But when the disciple was satisfied, then He uttered that glorious beatitude on all in succeeding ages who without the sight of His pierced hands and spear-thrust side, with no human vision of their King, should yet in exultant faith hail Him as their Lord and their unmodified God!

The Last Resort of Faith is the theme of the text, and I invite you to resolve it into its three elements.

# I

First, this kind of faith is the rule of the market,—we must see or we decline to believe. I am persuaded that the works cited by Jesus were His public miracles. The word used in the passage had grown into a technical term conveying a definite meaning to the hearer. When Jesus said "works" they did not think of philanthropic works, e. g., buying bread in the shop and

carrying it to the hungry. They recalled the mountainside, the assembled thousands, the westering sun, the question to Philip, the five loaves, and two fishes—the seated throng, the broken bread, the lavish distribution after giving thanks, and the baskets that remained. It was a miracle stupendous in amount, incredible in origin. It satisfied their faith as well as their appetite. Now they knew that this was the “teacher come from God, for no man could do these signs except God were with him.” The works of Jesus again could not be simply ceremonial acts in the temple or on the rostrum of the synagogue. They did remember that He went into the place of meeting by regular habit; they knew that He attended the sacred feasts at Jerusalem as every pious Israelite must. But it was not these facts that lay paramount in their mind. It was the fact that near the one place He gave sight to the blind, and in the other He strengthened the withered arm. Undoubtedly the works of Jesus startled and fixed the attention of the people. The exclamations recorded in the Gospels show us how deeply impressed beholders were. “We never saw it of this fashion,” was the verdict after the cure of the paralytic. “We have seen strange things, to-day.” Truly the things were new and passing strange. But they were just the events that human fancy craved; and, we may as well admit, they were the only things that at that time and perhaps in other times, too, could arrest the eye and shock the mind into reverent regard.

We are as a race devoted to the idea of external and objective reality. We seek for things that can be measured by the five senses. We are incurably dramatic. All the world's a stage, and we are actors on

it. That is, we are never content with the subtle processes of the soul. There is something decidedly Grecian in our system. We must have a troop of deities playing in the forest, by the stream, and visualized in the city street or the noble temple. We are like the early Japanese; we frame our earth and people our lands by the direct interposition of the fancied Powers. Men today call themselves scientific and practical; men ask for open results, tabulated statistics, concrete forms. It is the store full of goods and the ledger full of sales; it is the seething furnace and roaring machinery; it is the rushing train loaded to the top with freight or carrying the precious burden of human lives; it is the massive battleship, every fourteen-inch gun primed for use; it is the government service, with power oozing out of every department; it is the uncovered mine with its inexhaustible veins of gold; it is the nerve and fiber of body and brain in a wild quest of perishable goods,—it is these that men speak of as worthy of belief; and it is these to which the unstinted energy of mind and muscle is given. We are believers in the Real.

We believe in the Real, too, as respects science. The mere theory of nature has no interest for us. What difference does it make to me whether the earth is hot or cold at its center so long as I am not melted or reduced to frozen torpor? If the majestic comet sweeps round us with its skirt of flame, why should we be exercised as to its orbit or its age, providing it does not smite us in its hilarious course? We are looking for things definite and useful. The reason why the common people were not interested in the doctrine of evolution was just this; there was altogether too much hypothesis in it. You had to make an hypothesis to

get a rock into a vegetable, and another hypothesis to change the plant into the rudimentary amœba, and, finally, a very broad and daring hypothesis to cover the chasm between animal and man, a chasm running down deep into the division between nervous sentience and moral judgment. If you could only show them the process, just change the one into the other, then by virtue of the demonstration they would believe. What a strange race we are, with confident scientists on one side, and a mocking, unbelieving mass of humanity on the other!

It is to this innate feeling that Jesus makes a concession. Spiritual minds need no sign; they leap joyously over the unbridged chasm between faith and knowledge and stand unalarmed on the tableland of grace. But the common soul cannot do it. And Jesus loved the "slow of heart." He was a genuine teacher; He would rather deal with the smouldering fire than cast ready fuel into the raging flames. The divine Father has ever trained the dull instincts of the race in this way. He has not left Himself without some witness in nature or conscience. That witness has in untutored nations incited minds to see the divine in the objects of sense, the blazing and friendly sun, the beating and destructive tempest, the silent grave and the shades of departed spirits. That witness has started up deeds of expiation, has prompted costly sacrifices even to the life of a beloved child. Much of this has been dreadfully mistaken. And much has been the sodden interpretation of a selfish nature. But at any rate it proves that the mind must have its outward symbols, if only the crude fetich its own hands have fashioned. We need the Real and we accept its token.



The miracle served in Jesus' day to satisfy the un-spiritualized demand for a visible object. We do not ask for such signs now. Certainly the church has gone by the point of credulity when a supposed miracle can create faith. We laugh in the face of an ignorant priest who assures the lame man that he may throw away his crutches by being sprinkled with holy water, bowing before a consecrated picture, or rubbing the surface of the crucifix that has been "blessed." We shake the finger of scorn at any code of religious science that presumes by the aid of an expert "reader" to root out the seeds of some organic disease. That may be the last resort of physiologic faith; but is not the last resort of an honest heart which seeks communion with God. These are testimonies to men's insatiable trust to their senses. "Let me see the effect of divine power," is the cry of a myriad broken hearts, which become the prey and victims of designing imposters and are perhaps led down the broad road to religious despair.

But we need not throw away absolutely the craving for an objective and real exhibit. God grants in our day miracles not in the world of matter but in the serener and more plastic world of spirit. We may call them "works," divine deeds, wrought by the brooding power of the Holy Spirit. Wherever a craven soul has taken new courage, wherever a blistered heart has been fired by new zeal, wherever a drunken brute has risen from his place in the gutter and taken his seat by the Table of the Lord, there you have a wondrous Work which every eye can see and every soul can repeat in its own experience. Such works were done by Christ in His earthly ministry, as when He turned the tide of Zaccheus' life and gave him a goal for faith. But,



perhaps, they were so emphatically eclipsed by the physical miracles that men did not stop to wonder at their grandeur. We wonder at them now. We behold the savage of New Hebrides changed and in his right mind. It is a manifest "work" of God. It is a strong argument for the truth of Christianity. It satisfies the terms of a market contract,—you can see, you can hear, you can touch. If any man stands in doubt as to the efficacy of grace he may look to the black faces on the South Sea Islands smiling with a joy that the miser does not know, and get a fair guaranty of the power of God to save.

## II

We pass to the second element in the "works" ;—it declares something extraordinary. The miracle could not be explained by any of the laws then known to the world. And for the matter of that all the scientific inquiry of the past three hundred years has not satisfactorily covered the case. It was clear that Christ did not perform them by any tricks of legerdemain, though the Pharisees said He was in league with Beelzebub, that is, the occult and demonic powers of nature. It was clear, too, that mere physical magnetism could not account for the diversity of cures and certainly could not be a cause for the unusual effects on material nature. It would be clear in present day discussions that mental healing, the hypnotic influence of a great religious idea, could not create sight where it had never existed. Congenital blindness is a difficult problem for unaided psychology. The miracles of Christ could not have been produced by functions already at work in the world. If not, then some other force must have been introduced. But how did it

come? It could only come by breaking in on the laws which have always sustained the weight of the world; or by so guiding the functions of nature by a Superior Hand that they will do work they have never hitherto done. David Hume said, a Miracle broke the thread of uniformity, was an interloper in the universe, and could not be admitted. Jesus said, My Father worketh up to this time, and I work. Which of these explanations will you accept? If God created the world, whether by an instantaneous act or by the long progress of evolution, then He may be said to have the right and the power to work in it at His pleasure. If He does work His power will be purely spiritual; and as such it cannot and will not interfere with laws which He has previously set in motion.

The point I make here is that the extraordinary works which followed the steps of Jesus have a divine source and may justly challenge the admiration of the world. I do not say that signs were given to gratify the thoughtless curiosity of the age. Again and again the Lord refused point-blank to be party to so frivolous and irreverent a use of His power. "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; but there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of the prophet Jonah,"—truly a sign of sufficient magnitude to clinch the faith of an entire people. Christ does not work for histrionic effect. It would have done no good to heal a leper in the presence of King Herod who believed like all pagans in the activity of the underworld. He wanted to see a miracle, that he might gape at it as he did at a conjurer's trick. But he knew that a trick could be explained, and he would set down Jesus' works to connivance with the devils. On the other hand, earnest souls needing a nearer view of God

might be forced by some wonderful event to feel the presence of the Deity and yield their assent to His word.

Most of us know what it is to stand before a mystery. All the great discoveries of science were at one time mysterious portents. To the Polynesian savage the trickling of water into a newly-dug well is a miraculous event. In ancient times the cure for some bodily ills by bathing in a mineral spring seemed remarkable to the point of mystery. All the world knows how slowly the spell of wonder at the developments in electrical science wears away; for just when we are growing accustomed to the new régime along comes some more amazing discovery to rekindle the old fervor. And yet we stand today before the age-long mysteries that have never been resolved,—how life is sustained in the creations of nature, how mind and matter coalesce in the human personality, how man looks up instinctively to find his Lord in the heavens. Religion is said to begin in wonder and perhaps it does. And certainly for us as Christians it may rightfully end there. For who may stop marveling at the goodness of God that spent His Son's life on earth for the reclamation of men, steeped in sin and not ashamed of it? And who may contain his admiration when divine Grace awakes the slumbering soul of a worldling, convicts it of deadly indifference, reveals the splendors of piety,—only an obnoxious dream before,—and calls it to sacrifice of wealth, time, and love for the Lord Christ and His perishing children?

You tell me, this is very different from gazing on miracles of power. The field is different; even the kind of emotion excited is not the same. Perhaps, you are right, and I think you are. There is a difference,

a profound difference. But the superiority is all on the side of the moral miracle. I consider that when Christ slew the old Saul by the zenith-light He wrought a mightier miracle than when He healed the blind man. I hold that when on Pentecost's day He pierced the heart of the craven Peter and girded him to one of the most crucial endeavors in human history He did a far greater work, than when on the mountainside He cast the demon from the wallowing boy. In the one case He smote a blow on one of the desperate mental troubles of that day; in the other, He expelled the demon, fear.

You tell me again that we should not compare the wonder in religion and the astonishment at natural events. True enough, they do not agree. When you get wise and learned you will understand the latter. But study as you may, believe as abundantly as you will, you cannot grasp the limitless power of God. Not through all eternity will you be able to measure the forgiving love which gave us that supremest miracle of all, the Person of the Incarnate Son. The moral energy that springs from the Cross of Jesus flows through the channels of men's lives. You may see it, you may marvel at its sweep, you may even be abashed before the eye of one who rose from the dregs to the throne of human character. It is the modern challenge to every skeptical mind; it is the divine invitation and the divine promise to you. If wonder be the source of religion, this most stupendous of all wonders may lead you into the kingdom.

## III

We reach the most important element in miracle, viz., its purpose. Why did Jesus perform the works

to which He now directs the disciples' halting faith? He certainly did not exhibit this power for His own gratification; as a juggler might try to see how long he could keep four balls in the air without missing a cast. He was not drawn on unwittingly by the spirit of His age to develop His occult power in a variety of forms. Such was the opinion of Ernest Renan. He did not make a dramatic, a theatrical display of supernatural gifts, in order to hearten His disciples for their first campaign. After they were dead the life of the church and the faith of the individual Christian would have no relation to these ancient wonders. The judgment of a certain school of current thought is satisfied with this hollow theory of the miraculous. Nor can we exclude them altogether from the body of truth as being woven there by the automatic fancy of early believers. There is a valid purpose in every act even as there is a great principle in every parable. If you say, the miracle is an acted parable you have got as near to the heart of the matter as an epigram can ever lead you.

The miracles of our Saviour had two poles, one resting in Himself, the other in His attendants. The positive pole took into account who He was. It was determined by His divine origin. That divinity did not belong to His body, for His body was quite like every other man's. It must therefore belong to His spirit. Now spirit has, as we all know, a powerful influence on the body. Thus, when fear strikes the mind the body feels itself on the verge of collapse; and when anger flashes from the soul the face grows white, the lips tremble, and the very form is shaken with the intensity of emotion. If Jesus' divine power is seated in His spirit it will utter itself, not only by



word but by the magnetism of the nerve. Hence, we find healing issuing from the spoken command and from the silent emanations of His person. Moreover, if God is in Christ reconciling the world to Himself what hinders His being in the same Lord affirming His eternal authority over matter? But since Christ is God manifest in the flesh the miracle is no mediated effect but the original output of power. That is one pole of the wonder, to show divinity.

The other pole rests in the minds of the witnesses. They had to receive the new truth, or how could they ever enter the kingdom? The miracle was designed to put men in possession of divine revelation. Its aim was not to prove the deity of Jesus and the authority of His words, but to help them understand what His truth was. In other words, as Dr. Bruce says, miracle was the vehicle of revelation. It is bound up with the other forms of truth. It is woven into the warp and woof of the sacred text. To eliminate one is to eliminate all. The feeding of the five thousand is not simply the peg on which the illuminating discourse of the Bread of Life is hung. It has a distinct and evident declaration of its own. It holds the Person of Christ before the world as equal with God in the creation and disposition of matter. You are not only entranced with the sublimity of the truth He teaches; you are caught, amazed, awed by this Figure, greater than Moses, which rises above the ideas of earthly power and takes its seat by the right hand of God. Would you discard the miracle and save the sermon? Would you venture to abolish the Sacrament and support only the truth that lies at its base? No, we must have the Teacher but we must have the Worker as well. If you cannot lift your heavy souls



to the height of faith in His eternal principles, you can at least open your blinking eyes to the shimmering light by Galilee's Lake. If you cannot take in the reason for the resurrection or accept the testimony of His friends, you can at least stand with bowed head at the mouth of the ruptured tomb and cry with passionate voice into its deeps, "If thou hast taken Him away, show me where thou hast laid Him!" And then, oh, then, perchance, you will hear behind you the sweetest tones that ever mortal ear heard, and turning you will see the fairest Form that ever mortal eyes beheld, and like the yearning Magdalen you may fall at His feet and breathe out the precious words, "Rabboni!"—Master! So much for the physical wonder.

I need not ask what you take to be the purpose of the moral miracle. Erroneous notions have crept into the church's doctrine on this subject. God does not save men solely to present an effective instance of His sovereign pleasure. Nor does He save them, because there was no other way out of a creative difficulty. God saves men, because He loves them. God sent His Son as the most glorious emblem of His love. You may be a miracle, if you let the blood of Christ be sprinkled on your heart. You may repeat the wondrous work done on the soul of Augustine. You may be not a mere witness of the event; you may be its insulated subject. "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men" ; it now appears to you. Hold up the hand of faith, my friend, and let the electric current of truth enter your soul.

## VII

### THE SERVANT SURPASSING HIS LORD

*John 14:12. "And greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto the Father."*

THE words of our Lord in this verse institute both a comparison and a challenge. The comparison is between Himself and His successors, and we are doubtless surprised to read its terms. The challenge is addressed to men of halting spirit, feeble, resourceless, and on the brink of despair. They could not descry the future; they could only detect the lowering shades of night within whose sable pall they were already beginning to be wrapped. The challenge, however, had its glint of hope in the unexpected comparison. It does not matter how they had hitherto thought of Jesus. Their penetration into His mind may have been exceedingly slight, their faith in His predestined Messiahship infinitely small. One thing had become plain to them, namely, that they could never rise to the height of goodness attained by Him. It would seem, then, to be folly to speak of the servant's surpassing his Lord. Yet Jesus' language admits of no other construction. Why should one attempt to reinterpret the comparison in view of the glowing centers of light that mark the onward sweep of his church, like Eastern stars luring Wise men to their goal? That the Saviour's work has already been excelled stands proven on the page of history. It is

our duty now to accept the challenge and study its conditions.

## I

First, we are constrained to ask where the superiority of the believer lies. The answer is, In the works. The superiority could not lie in intellectual ability. Jesus evinced a depth of understanding, a reasoning faculty, a charm of manner, and skill in argument, that compelled attention from His bitterest enemies. They sent their best debaters to catch Him in His speech but He defeated them with their own logic. They dispatched officers of state to arrest Him without notice but His words exercised so subtle a fascination over their practical minds that they came away exclaiming, Never man spake like this man. Jesus was Grecian in the composition of His mind; could the disciples ever hope even to equal Him, let alone surpass His powers? Many a teacher has trained students who developed far larger capacity than he. I remember one who frankly stated that he expected his pupils to outstrip him in service; that was his business as a teacher. Certainly, the men who guided the unfolding mind of John Calvin, some of them the strongest intellects of their age, must have seen the brilliant genius that lay plastic beneath their touch and have forestalled the verdict of time. I am aware that critics have argued for an advance of doctrine as between Paul and Christ. And some have gone to the length of holding that the Apostle created certain cardinal dogmas that lay beyond the reach of Jesus' mind. The point is not well taken and cannot be sustained. The central theme of the New Testament is redemption, atonement by the blood of the

Cross. Did Paul conceive it? Was it his masterly interpretation of the Cross that first laid before the infant church the possibility of salvation by the death of Jesus? If that be true then he stands as the foremost thinker in all the realm of human exertion. The real fact is that while he gloriously developed the truth the Lord Himself had planted the primal seed, that protoplasmic power which has vitalized a stricken world.

Again, the superiority did not lie in character. Many a teacher whose pupils have excelled him in achievement has had a heart of gold; indeed, his own spirit has shaped the contour of their lives. I have been reading once more of Luther, the gigantic mover of the Reformation. His will was indomitable, his personal prowess unrestrained. He stirred, gripped, moulded, stimulated Germany as no other man ever influenced his native land. In the blaze of his perennial popularity we are apt to forget the forces that guided him. Follow him into the recesses of his early studies, his mental struggles, and his final triumphs, and there you find at least one man whose words helped Luther to the truth. Staupitz had little of the dramatic to commend him to the admiration of the masses; but he had a heart of warm, pulsing, evangelic blood, and Luther once feeling it never afterwards forgot its beat. It is frequently the quiet preceptor in a quiet study who gives to the world in a person other than his own a power that makes for good. Luther did not excel the patient monk of Erfurt in piety. Can we for a moment presume that the disciples would dim the sinless fame of Jesus by a spiritual glory of their own?

Well, if the servant has no advantage over his Lord

either in mind or heart, where, we ask, can the superiority lie? It must have some basis if the assertion of the text be right. Let us keep strictly to the words and we shall have no trouble. Jesus makes no comparison as to talents but only as to works. It would be false modesty for Him to belittle His mental or moral stature. He was not afraid to say, "Which of you convicteth me of sin?" But He knew that His own accomplishments were merely premonitions of the greater deeds to be wrought by a consecrated church. Therefore the verse reads: "And greater works than these shall he do."

What were the works Jesus had in view? There are only two kinds possible, those impinging on matter and those that take place in the realm of spirit. To which of these did He refer? The answers have been various but I think we can arrive at the truth.

Let us examine His works on nature and ask, if these can be excelled. You must always judge of a physical fact from two standpoints, as to what it is, and as to how it impresses the observer. We are persuaded that our Lord displayed marvelous power over the forces of the natural world. He healed the sick, He erased the leprous spots, He illuminated the blind eyes, He traced a path on the trackless deep, He fed the hungry multitude from a minimum store, and He gave back to the body the escaped spark of life. What more was there to do? Looking at the career of the apostles, we ask, Did they produce works different in type from these? A close inspection reveals the utmost similarity. Looking at the career of the church we note the absence of even the personal mediation of power such as was granted to the first disciples. We see that the only powers given to us are those that come through

the commonest channels. Prayer, the exercise of faith, the soothing effect of a loving heart—these are the weapons of Christian service; and surely these are inferior in kind to the virtue that issued from the word of our Master. Take the weapon of prayer. We believe in it. What a solace it has been in the dark days of depression! What victories church workers have won by its promises! Luther by Melancthon's bed!—the whole ocean of his love is poured out in one mighty stream of petition, and since that time the church of Germany has believed that recovery hung upon his words. St. Bernard, preaching and praying—and disease seemed to leave the tortured bodies, and sin and despair the minds of his hearers. No, the superiority of works did not lie in their effects on the coarse matter of the world.

Nor can we find the new element in the impression made on the popular mind. The Evangelist Mark ceases not to remind us of the amazement evoked by Jesus' miracles. He wrote for the Latin mind, and the Latin mind was caught by the symbol of force. Therefore, he records the effects of the wondrous works on the bystanders. It might be said that the lust for the marvelous was a symptom of the times. Men were unscientific, crude, without ability to analyze, and whatever was a little out of the ordinary would be sure to fasten their attention. Such miracles as Jesus did would be out of place today. Today observers would be inclined to repeat Renan's skeptical banter: "Give me a council of doctors and scientific experts, and if they examine the case and find that life has returned to the body, I shall then believe in miracle." As a matter of fact the same kind of amazement that followed the path of Jesus follows the movements of



Christian physicians today in India and China. Not, of course, for the same reason but because the untutored minds of the East are not as advanced as ours in the knowledge of the human body, and hence cannot see how the impaired system reacts to the stimulus of certain remedies or surgical treatment.

Furthermore, wherever the church has wrought in the name of her Lord by cure of soul or healing of mind, surprise and astonishment have greeted her efforts, quite like the wonder at the tomb of Lazarus or at Simon's table when He forgave the penitent Magdalen. The theater of achievement has been enormously widened since Jesus was here. He looked into the mirror of His own nation, though here and there a stranger appeared. But take away the Centurions and the Greeks and the Syro-Phenecian suppliant, and you see how narrow racially His sphere was. With His church the world has become a parish. People of every race, of every grade of development, of every degree of sinfulness, have heard her words and seen her works. Yet, the amazement is of the same type, sometimes the bated breath of surprise, sometimes a convulsion of soul seismic in strength, changing the clod of bruted matter into a man.

If the "greater works" are not wrought on nature, where shall we look for their impress? The only other possible domain is the human spirit. It is here that the followers of Jesus have surpassed His majestic service. I speak now only of the fact; the reason will come later. We have just noted the difference in scope in the two ministries. If Jesus had lived to the ripe age of Buddha He might have won the same gallery of adherents. The restless activity of the apostles soon carried the Gospel beyond the confines of Asia. Mere

extent of space is no true measure of superiority. Because Russia rules over the largest continental area unbroken in its borders, she is not thereby accounted the greatest, that is, the most successful nation in morals, industry, or intelligence. Christ did not seek to cover distance or He might Himself have entered the precincts of the Imperial City. Counting miles, countries, or even converts, is a poor way to set forth the mathematics of the Christian faith. A distinguished missionary statesman declares: "I had rather plant one seed of the life of Christ under the crust of heathen life, than to cover the whole crust over with veneer of our social habits, or the vestiture of Western civilization."

How, then, does the church surpass the work of Jesus?

1. It pierces the armor of religious formalism and sets free the imprisoned soul. Christ could not make any deep breach in the self-righteousness of the Pharisee. He had one or two inquirers from their ranks, but they were hesitating and uncertain. The voice that Nicodemus lifted up in the council-chamber was weak and impermanent. Joseph waited till death had claimed its victim to show the smallest interest in the Prophet of Nazareth. The great men of the period refused to acknowledge Him. He did not square with their ideas of Messianic virtue. He stood distinctly opposed to what they considered vital to Hebrew religion. He would not interpret the law as the fathers did; He would not bind Himself by the nicety of construction. He was independent and original, and they loved nothing so much as loyalty to the letter of Scripture. Therefore, they hated the new Evangel

and its Proclaimer, and their criticism extended to the children who cried Hosanna to Him in the Temple courts. Jesus could do no mighty work among the rulers; He could not effect a profound change of character in their group. His efforts to purify the nation's life at its fountainhead were dismal failures. We cannot conceal this fact.

But with the disciples carrying the Gospel of Pardon another experience is manifest. They preached the same truth embodied in the same Person, and only a few weeks after Jesus did. But a remarkable difference in attitude is now encountered. It has something of the re-vamping of opinion that took place in the Manchester audience, when Beecher assumed to justify the war for the Union which had paralyzed the cotton trade in England. He faced a bitter, hostile, and unimpressible company, but his flaming eloquence, his plea for right and honor, his picture of the cruel and merciless traffic of slavery, slowly but surely loosed the bars of prejudice and finally won his reluctant hearers into sympathy. I suppose that no greater miracle of grace ever took place than when the priests at Jerusalem threw down their pride, their love for ancient symbols, and bowed before the Cross of Calvary. Yet a multitude came, forsaking house and profession, creed and standing, braving contumely, anger, and even death, that they might accept the humble Carpenter as their Lord. This victory Jesus could not win. It was reserved for His church. It is today a possible achievement. Religious formalism is as invincible now as in the time of the apostles. Saul of Tarsus lifts his head proudly above the fisher-folk who fill the body of the church; but Saul of Tarsus meets his noontide flash and falls conquered and

abashed in the presence of his King. No man can justify his spiritual life, be it never so gorgeously decorated with the trophies of penance or merit, no man can justify his spiritual life or boast himself of its power, when once he has matched that life with the seamless beauty of the Saviour's.

2. Again, the disciples challenged and overcame pagan immorality. Jesus could not do it; He did not try. No other instrument ever penetrated the public depravity and healed it. Men thought that a pure form of government might do it but they were disappointed. Men trusted in a fine sample of philosophic virtue. They were woefully mistaken. But the followers of Jesus came with His Gospel, went down into the dregs of human iniquity, sought entrance into the slave-pen, the den of vice, the very "sink of Rome," and gave new heart to a crumbling civilization. These humble, uncultured men, only a few in number, recklessly set themselves to change the face of ancient society. Christ made no impression on the great world beyond Nazareth. Even the pagan cities of the Decapolis had no ear for His message. The tyrant on the imperial throne never dreamed that a meek Enthusiast of Jewry would eventually compete with him for the possession of Rome. Yet, this is what actually occurred, and not by force of arms but by the subtle persuasion of purity as over against the disintegrating forces of evil. When you look into the face of Onesimus and hear his story, learn that he was rescued from the slums of sin into which despair had plunged him, see him yielding ready submission to the bondmaster whom he once hated, and then realize that the change took place after Paul had laid the hand of Grace upon him,—what can restrain the lips from an

exultant cry: Truly, a greater work hath he done, than even the Lord Himself on earth!

3. I think of a third way, in which the superiority is revealed, very different in form from the others but laden with rich success. I mean the enshrining of sacred truth in Sacred Writ. It must startle a follower of the false prophet to be told that Christ wrote nothing. Mohammed crystallized many of his "revelations" in the drops that flowed from his pen. He preserved them for the faithful in all ages, and they might be tampered with only on pain of perdition. But Jesus Christ does not live by written word alone; He lives by the inward consecration of believers. To those men who are warmed and inspired by contact with truth, He commits the duty of record and interpretation. He could not tell the story; they could, for the story would be complete ere they began to write. From such men comes the Book which more than any other smites conscience, incites to love, levels up society, opens the mind to knowledge, and gives us a just idea of God. "Greater works than these shall he do." Greater than preaching, greater than miracle, greater even than the vision of a bodily Christ is the influence of the Bible which the disciples were empowered to produce.

## II

We take up now our second question, and this may be answered more concisely, What is the reason for the superiority of the servant over his Lord? The text avers: "Because I go to the Father." That seems to be contradictory on the face of it. To get power you must come in contact with it. To feel the force of a man's



personality you desire to be in his company, listen to his words, get his point of view, emulate his example, steep your heart in the atmosphere of his thought. It would seem as though Jesus were putting an end to His influence by departure, thereby reducing to a minimum the possibility of His followers ever arriving at the promised goal. But let us look into His meaning.

They had to *take His place*. They were not called upon to baptize with John's symbol or preach with John's austerity. John had no real successor; he needed none. Indeed, for the matter of that he could have none because his work was preparatory, and you can prepare only once. They were not called upon to "sit in Moses' seat." The Pharisees had essayed to sit there and had made a botch of it. Doubtless, John or Nathaniel or Paul might have ascended the Mosaic Bema and dispensed royal justice. They were called upon to fill a more difficult position. It was a new age to which they must speak; it was a new truth which they must interpret. Anyone who has succeeded to the honor and duty of a distinguished official in church or state knows how hard is the task. We are unsettled by the numerous failures which history has no scruples in detailing. For example, when Abraham Lincoln was felled by the assassin's shot his place was taken by a man in every respect his inferior. We do not blame Andrew Johnson so much for his collapse as the party that thought him big enough to sit by the Emancipator's side. Hence, it comes home to us with solemnizing force that we are today in the place of Christ, and the world must judge of Him largely through our persons. We sit in His seat; we communicate His word; we reflect His life. Can Christ



do "greater works" through us, poor, weak, shivering mortals of earth?

Well, He is pursuing the work whether we address our energies to it or not. Let me cite two channels in which the current grows stronger. I am persuaded, that the doctrine of Christianity is better taught today than at any time since it was first prescribed. Let us single out the matter of social salvation. Here is a fact that may very easily be obscured. Hotheads and malcontents are twisting its terms till they do not convey the original meaning at all. It is true that no man liveth to himself and no man dieth to himself; that he is not only fixed in his responsibility to God but also to man. I can conceive of a believer who having tasted of the water of life secretes himself in the caves of the desert and refuses to help another up to the fountain. But how paltry and shriveled and out of joint his soul must be! I can conceive of some satisfaction, selfish and faint, when marriage deliberately shuts the door against a childish voice in the home or the pattering footsteps in the hall; but how incalculably dull and languid that is as compared with happiness of parents and children, when duty and affection vie in the splendid task of forming deathless character! Salvation is not individual and individual only, as a medieval theology might seem to dictate. Salvation is a matter of twos and threes and hundreds, and ultimately of a renovated earth. It has taken a great many generations to think this thought out and it will take many more to work it into the warp and woof of Christian practice. I am persuaded that in this cardinal theme the disciple had a "greater work" than was possible for the Lord in His human career.

The second channel where the current strengthens is that of actual service. We can do more work than Jesus could, so He affirms. How? Because now Christ is broken up, so to say, in a myriad of forces scattered over the whole earth instead of being consolidated in Palestine. Paul calls Christ the head and the church His body. Get the intent of that symbol. We are not all the same kind of member nor do we possess the same kind of function. It takes an indefinite number of parts and organs to make up the human system; but when they belong to the same person, they act in perfect harmony and evince the glorious force which we call Life. From this point of view it is not the single believer but the vast company whom no man can number, who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, to whom the tribute is spoken: "He shall do greater works." I am deeply thankful for this hint. It proves the unity of the riven church; and it gives assurance that however skeptics may doubt the mission of the church and however deep may be the discouragement that sometimes falls upon the members, we may rest in this confidence: They shall be mine, in the day when I make up my jewels!

So far we have spoken of the Lord's departure in its effect on the disciples; now let us view it as it affects his own career. We arrive at the crux of the problem. We stand, as it were, behind the scenes with the great Artificer of our salvation and watch Him adjust the levers to the working out of the desired end. The query is not alone, why the church will do mightier works than Jesus, but why He could not do those works Himself. The solution is simple,—a few, unim-

pressive words, but Life and death hang upon them; "because I go to the Father."

"I go,"—*how* did He go? Did He rise with Elijah in the flaming chariot and escape the bands of the grave? Did He disappear suddenly from the haunts of men, and ascend the solemn hill,

"To lie in state, while angels wait,  
With stars for tapers tall?"

He went to death,—yes to death. He learned the mysterious secrets of the tomb. He found what it means to sever soul from body, to go alone through the corridors of the unknown world. But how did He go to death? Was it with pomp and show, with pageant and catafalque, with mourning thousands and draped cortège? Did He go as a prince or an honored teacher, attended by the wise and powerful of earth? I stood with head uncovered one day in the streets of Athens as the bier of a minister of state was carried by. The King of Greece walked in procession with the exalted of his realm to pay the final tribute to their dead. Did Jesus go from earth in company such as this? Well, what was the meaning of His going, and why should He make His grave with the wicked and with the rich in His death? You will find an interpretation of the Cross in our present verse. The men of Christian loyalty could not do the "greater works," until the Cross of Golgotha had nailed the sin of the world to its head. The Cross was like the electric spark rushing with incalculable speed to the fuse, that communicated with the underlaid explosives,—and in a twinkling Hell Gate was a mass of ruins. Men can now preach Christ and get converts, for the adamant rock of human perversity has been shivered.

Do you believe it? Do you know it? Have you tried it on your neighbor? Have you seen the cataclysmic movements in a soul, when the Cross of Christ convicts of sin?

"I go," says Jesus,—but *whither* did He go? Did He go simply to that

"undiscovered country  
From whose bourne no traveler e'er returns?"

Did He sink into the embrace of a Pantheistic God, an ocean of eternity so dear to the fancy of the Hindu worshipper? Did He take His place as inhabitant of the Other World, level in rank with Moses and David, and Isaiah, with Socrates and right-loving Cato? If that is all we may close our Bibles, and form a league with Matthew Arnold or Arnold Bennett. If that is all it matters not what church you espouse, what creed you follow, what kind of ethical life you live. If that is all I cannot see what difference it makes, whether you have the Paradise of Mohammed, or the oblivion of the Buddha, or the unvarnished agnosticism of Frederic Harrison.

Or, did the Lord return to His primeval glory? Did He resume His interrupted place in the Godhead? Did He connect Himself up with the powers He once exercised, and now having shaken off the sorrows and limitations of earth begin the eternal campaign for the regeneration of mankind? Going to the Father must have this significance or it has none. It means, that Christ is now in a position to do the works, which in His human state He was forbidden to do. Read the New Testament to get this view. Strip off all the figures of speech,—the mediatorial powers, the standing at the right hand of God, the

slain Lamb, the humanized Deity, who gleams from the sacred Candlestick. Strip off the incidentals and get at the core. Leave behind for the time all the contradictions of logic, all the fallacies of argument, which men have found in the deity of Jesus. And remember now His promise of perpetual presence. Remember the symptoms of power which He evinced even in His earth-life. Remember the call of St. Paul and the visions of John on Patmos. Remember the nineteen centuries of Christian service and the unimpaired triumphs of the church. Remember the latest coalescence of Christian sympathy, as nation after nation has sought and found relief at the base of Calvary. Here lies the secret of the disciple's superiority over his Lord. Not the church's secular power, not a fortunate combination of circumstances, not merely a decayed world that can get help from no other source and by sheer desperation is driven to this,—not these, but the exalted, crowned, and benevolent King puts into human effort the solemn certainty of heaven.

It is said that during the critical battle of Gettysburg, the Union general was stationed in the cupola of the theological seminary, and from that point of vantage directed the conflict. Every corps of his army was within sight, every movement could be detected. The needy points were assisted, the exposed battalions were covered. Some possible rendezvous was quickly marked and an important outpost surely determined. Word went forth through the army, "Meade is watching us from above." Nerves grew stronger, faltering hearts took courage, the enemy's advances like Pickett's charge were met with unflinching resistance, and victory at length was on their side. A more crucial

struggle is before us in the world. The brigades of the army are deployed here and there. The fight is real, bitter, to the death. But over us, with loving eye, watches the Great Commander, and from His lips ever and anon comes the word of cheer to fainting souls:

“Verily, verily, I say unto you; he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto the Father.”



## VIII

### THE MAGIC OF A NAME

*John 14:14. "If ye ask anything in my name, I will do it."*

**T**HE splendor of the promise is overwhelming. We seem ushered into the realm of magic with an Arabian lamp in our hand and a golden key to unlock the treasures of hope. To have whatever one might wish is the consummation of bliss to childhood. To the grown man the substance of the wish is changed but the lust for its fulfillment is unabated. Wealth, fame, glory, rank, culture, long life and friendships, and when these are finished, as finished they must be, then a serene abode on the hills of Paradise, and its winsome delights, a perfecting of the joys below,—this is the desire of the heart, an Eldorado to our dreams; and this we may expect to obtain according to the terms of the promise.

But we are going too fast. The assurance is qualified. It is not a bald, bare guaranty of every human whim and fancy. In fact, the will of the petitioner has little to do with the answer. Prayer or the expression of wish is a different exercise from the rubbing of a magician's ring. Prayer is intercourse with the holy Presence of God. Prayer consolidates the forces of the praying mind and directs them to a proper end. Prayer moved by the divine Spirit verifies the promise of the text.

We consider, first, the instrument of prayer, and secondly, the grounds for its success.

## I

The instrument of prayer is a name.

It is a settled canon in social exchange that no request may be preferred save on the basis of a just claim. Such claim may be of the simplest form,—a long acquaintance, a mutual friend, a favor done in early days. We are by instinct quick to seize on some primordial obligation, as one that creates the best atmosphere. There are also secondary claims, and men of political skill know the value of these. I should hesitate long, and study the matter earnestly, ere I made up my mind to go to the President and ask a government position for my friend. I could plead the merits of his capacity, his integrity, and his past service; I might appeal to the welfare of the nation—the patriotic argument—in support of my request. But I would know that if another applicant of equal merit had the support of men better known to the President, men to whom the President looked for advice in consideration of past experiences, such an applicant would stand a better chance of securing the prize. It would not be a case of favoritism; it would be a question of claim, and I should bow willingly to the decision. The point is, every request bears the marks of recommendation. Now it is the beauty of a Persian queen that gives the suppliant room in the royal presence; anon it is the recollection of an unenviable past, the skeleton in the closet, that may be dragged out into the light of day by a woman's revenge, that does the deadly deed to the fearless Baptist. Or, again, it is an undying affection such as bound David and his friend that mediates every request.

We hesitate to bring the truisms of life into the

sphere of religion. Perhaps the expedients of earth are not in place here. We would rid the solemn office of prayer of such crude and debasing elements. Weights and scales, claims and reasons, mercenary adjustment of a sacred relation,—these surely cloud the issue and hinder our approach to God. What claim may we prefer as ground for divine favor? We are not worshippers of Baal trying by the spattered blood of bulls, by the mutilation of body, by the drill of fire to prove our right to be heard. And yet sincere hearts have found a good deal of peace at the smoking altar. The temple of ancient Israel was the shrine of holy grace. Humble souls brought their offerings for sin and sought atonement by them. If we accept the revelation of the Old Testament we must accept the scheme of sacrifice, and that means—to speak plainly—establishing a claim on God. “Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse” is the quid pro quo exacted of Judah for the opened windows of blessing. Religion is the scene of exchange. It is not the channel of divine benediction unmixed with human endeavor. Faith that cannot lead to works is a poor specimen of Christian loyalty and soon withers away under the blaze of criticism. Jesus condemned the fig-tree for its pretense.

We are right, then, in looking for some gateway to the spiritual citadel. There is only one, though men have peered about its walls and parapets to discover other and more acceptable ascents. The ancient fortress had just one gangway to its halls. If you go to the ruins of Mykenae in the Peleponnesus, you must pass up the winding approach to the narrow gate, where today as in her prime stand the frowning lions, monitors, guardians of the inner court. There

was no other entrance to the castle, and in those ancient times when warfare was by hand only time could slay the heroic defenders of hearth and home. Listen to the parable here unfolded. The heart of God is the citadel of truth. Men have tried by innumerable devices to force an entrance in their own way. They have failed. It may be, you are doing it today. If you are, let me assure you at once,—you cannot succeed. The dexterous, many-sided mind of Saul met a crushing defeat. The religious experimenter of the present age can do no better. Saul of Tarsus had advantages which few men today possess. He had behind a long and distinguished line of experts trained in the arts of religion. He had the gathered wealth of worldly learning which here and there, as he himself admits, flashed out a facet-glint of truth. Yet, he could not find a way to God that satisfied him altogether.

Did you ever investigate the forms which the quest of prayer develops? What do you plead, when you get down on your knees in a cool moment and ask for help? The glamour of life passes and the shadows of a devout reverence are about you. What makes you think you will be heard by heaven? What gives your weary heart a sort of bracing hope? Think over the claims you might make, you *do* make, and test their validity. If you wish to open a secret drawer in the desk, you may be hard put about. Every key refuses to release the spring; pressure is without avail. Then, you suddenly come upon the device made by the joiner, by which, perhaps, you move a piece of wood hitherto unnoticed, and presto! out comes the drawer. The way to the throne is hedged with difficulties. Not every pretext can find it. Not every mind is keen enough or

humble enough to find it; but when once discovered what glorious revelations await the eager eye!

Well, study the matter for a moment or two. I pray to God, because I am a child of His by nature. It is He who gave me form and life and soul and speech and a place in the world to occupy. Therefore, I have a substantial claim on Him, as every child has on his parent. Common law recognizes the duty of a father to care for his child. Can the heavenly Father do less than that? But then, there is a reverse side: God has a duty, so have I. Is my duty perfectly performed? And on the basis of duty done may I hold Him to His natural covenant? Or, perhaps we are inclined to press the claim from the point of view of our moral relations. We believe in the moral administration of the world. Despite the invective of Mr. Arnold that a Moral Governor at the head of the natural system is unthinkable, we believe in the moral authority of God. We refuse to think of Him as a cosmic Cæsar, with the mailed hand of tyranny on His every subject. That would stamp us as in sympathy with Islam, and Islam has no message for a progressive soul. No, we catch the beat of moral purpose; we hear the swell of the far-off tide which moves towards us in ever growing cadences of inspiration, intoning the righteousness of God and His moral fellowship with us. Still, how can the worn and battered soul with its broken pledges and its selfish hopes ever stand in the presence of the Holy King, and plead the sanctity of his moral obligation? It is impossible, and we may as well get over the delusion. Moral or mechanical, whatever His relation to us is, we cannot appeal to the throne on the basis of mere essential likeness.



Then, I hear the case pressed from another angle. The claim now is personal, not general. It is what we are or have been or have done or our family have achieved or are credited with achieving that supports the claim. The complacency of the Pharisee has a seat in every breast. You have a piece of it, and so have I. If we do not acknowledge it Christ will acknowledge it for us. He enshrined it in amber, the amber of a parable. He wrote the history of the type in a very few words. Not long since a modern apologist argued that Jesus was not a fair critic, nor a competent historian; He was prejudiced; He had misjudged a noble scion of the Jewish race. We answer, All the men of Gamaliel's school may not have been like this one; but this one typifies the self-righteous soul in every race and in every age. It is he who can go to God and argue for a favor on the ground of past record. Can you do so? Would you venture to take your life for the past year and lay it down before High Heaven and demand consideration, because of its spiritual beauty? You smile at the suggestion. Yet that is the very course multitudes are taking today. "I have done the best I could; what more can be expected?" What a sham for religious excellence! "Done the best you could," and expect to get paid on the preferment of that claim! "Done the best you could!"—got the better of your neighbor in a bargain; raised a suspicion about your neighbor's motive that you might get the job over his head; refused to help that poor man, who needed a lift at the moment; supposed that a single hour in church during the week covered absolutely all the religious service you were required to give! Do you venture to think that a claim like this will



be honored by the Throne, whose glorious code is to love your heavenly Father and your neighbor as yourself? If you are clothed in such armor to fight your way up to the sacred citadel, you will find it nothing but papier-mâché, pierced and melted by your own pretense.

No, the road to the Holy Presence does not lie through slender claims like these. We must look higher. We will try out the meaning of this verse. "If ye shall ask anything in my name," says Jesus. The emphasis is on "Name." It has a ring of confidence. We know the value of a name in introduction. If you bear the card of an influential Senator, you will encounter no opposition in entering the private offices of any department of government. If you speak the magic name of a distinguished author, your right to a place in the councils of literary workers is undisputed. We see today millions of souls gathered about the magnetic syllables of a single name, for example, Mohammed. We follow the movements of thought and are amazed how many currents are focused in the work of a single thinker, for example, Calvin. Men love to be grouped under a familiar personal slogan, just as loyal subjects love to circle about their liege. There are strong reasons why such centripetal influences are at work. The name is electric with attractive energy.

But can this be true of the name which Jesus bore? And can it be true on an infinitely higher platform than those we have just considered? To do the work in view His name must be higher than Moses', who gave the law, or Abraham's, who founded the nation, or David's, who organized the kingdom, or Isaiah's, who read the future. It must not be a name stained

with earth's lust or fired by earth's ambitions; it must not deal with the trivial hints of court or camp, or the passing gleams of a human philosophy; it must not even be the royal name of the true prophet who is able to give a genuine reward for favors received, namely, the peace of God. The Name that is to set going currents of almighty power must be an Almighty Name. This fact carries us into the heart of Hebrew faith. They had a Name, which stood to them in that relation. In Jesus' time men spoke it with bated breath, if at all. Indeed, the common custom was to offer another name in its place,—Adonai, my Lord, and not "I am that I am." Could it be that Jesus claimed the right to assume the functions of that Name?

The use of names among the Jews was a piece of sublime poetry. Every name for man or angel had a subtle meaning; it betokened its owner's character. Jacob meant "supplanter," for that was the stamp of his life. Isaiah meant, the "Lord the Saviour," for the prophet preached the ultimate safety of his people. Thus, God's two supreme names were graven with His holy nature; and they recorded the two phases of His revelation, first, Elohim, God the mighty, the Author of the world; secondly, Jehovah, the Ever-living, who keepeth Covenant with His people. And now do we have a third Name for the Holy One? Is Jesus' Name to be written on the sky, as the latest demonstration of its glory in the eyes of men? The apostles so understood its letters, and with incorrigible faith proclaimed its absolute power. "None other Name" is the watchword of the youthful church. "None other Name" is the word heralded over the seas, to Athens, the seat of culture, and to Rome, the seat of power. They drew their reasons for its mysterious

charm from the language of the Lord Himself. He used it lavishly in the last discourses. He came in His Father's name; He sent them forth in His own. Formerly, these innocent disciples had asked nothing in His name; now they were to shake the world by its potent syllables. Once they drew near to God in the solemn awe of the ancient temple, where in olden times the Shekinah dwelt; now, they were to empower their prayers by the use of His triumphant Name. The change is stupendous, and we cannot wonder that the faithful Jew was likely to rank Christ either as a man with spent reason or as a desperate blasphemer.

We get our instructions for prayer in this text: Ask in my Name! What could Jesus mean by the charge? What do you make out of it as a rule of religious life? It is perfectly apparent that the recitation of a name even so holy as this can of itself bring no answer. God is not wooed by words. The most lovelorn maiden asks of her suitor something more than poetic phrase and gilded promises. The modern king of finance solicits something more substantial than hypothetical statements. You cannot get him to invest cold cash in a company that intends to trade on air. I see no reason why God may not expect some better assurance from His petitioners than the mere rehearsal of formulas. The only objection I have to liturgical prayers is that being written by someone other than the user they lack the spring, the warmth, the vigor, the elasticity of a prayer born of private need. You cannot expect to be filled with power, if you follow mimetically the course of words and do not make them live by the splendor of a heart's devotion.

To pray "in the name" of Jesus is not to repeat its

sounds. That would be magic, a Christianized sorcery. The meaning is deeper, and is twofold. It means, first, that he who prays thus represents Christ, stands in His stead, confesses His revealed position as the Son of God, and acknowledges His supreme authority. The Christian must represent his Lord,—present Him to others, present Him to God, and as the text shows present Him to Himself in heaven. No mistake must be made in the act. A duty like this is assumed by the ambassador, when he carries a message from his sovereign to another prince. It was this office that Benjamin Franklin discharged to the French court for nine years with such conspicuous success. He stood for the Republic of the West, a new type of government, at once the joy and vexation of the whole earth. The responsibility of our duty as Christian petitioners is now disclosed. When you pray you may pray only for those things that minister to the growth of His kingdom. Hence, many of the prayers we have used consciously or unconsciously for generations must drop out of the book. They never have been answered, and they never can be. They are contrary to the work of Jesus as the Son of God. And many of the bigger things we have deliberately passed by will now rise and demand a place. We have prayed that the kingdom might come and never understood what its coming might entail. We see now that to have the kingdom would dispossess us of some of our property, nip in the bud some pleasant financial prospect, dispute some of our claims to greatness, change much of our social life, kill the germ of rivalry which is eating out the heart of nations, and make brotherhood a reality, not a poet's dream. That is one meaning of the phrase "in my Name."

The second meaning carries with it the acceptance of Christ's ideals. To pray in His name we must live in His name. Well, one of His most pronounced traits, perhaps the most pronounced, was sacrifice. It was contrary to the genius of the world He came to save. The men who moved the earth in His day did it by the very opposite quality—by physical power, the assertion of self. To them the Superman was the sole possible candidate for greatness. To Jesus personal fortunes were secondary. He sought the welfare of mankind. If you pray His prayer and in His name you must show the same trait. Can you do it? Are you ready to do it? The French people have placed in their Pantheon statues to the six devoted citizens of Calais. The story is full of grave fascination. King Edward's troops and ships beleaguered the city for a year and captured it only after the most stubborn defense. The valorous garrison was granted reprieve on condition that six men should be chosen to suffer the king's wrath. The joy at release was turned into the darkest sorrow, until the Burgess followed by five others offered himself as sacrifice for the town. With halters about their necks they were led into the presence of the monarch. His rage was unbounded. Expostulation, serious counsels, pleadings by his court were of no avail. Then the queen, though in delicate state, flung herself on her knees and besought the life of the freemen. Edward could not resist the gentle tones of her request:

“Lady, I would rather you had been elsewhere; you pray so tenderly, that I dare not refuse you; and though I do it against my will, nevertheless take them, I give them to you.”

Sacrifice for another was the chosen lot of Jesus. If you pray in His name, you must not decline to deny yourself and even lay down your life for the cause.



## II

The use of the Divine Name means success in prayer. This is the other theme of the text. Its notes are familiar. Multitudes of books have been written on the elements of "prevailing" prayer. Every Christian biography is seamed with incidents looking to that end. Some of these, let us confess, are far from the point. Prayer may lose its beauty by fixing the eye on the results and forgetting the method of reaching them. I think we need a caution in this respect. I have come to believe that if we judge prayer solely by its results we mistake its whole meaning. George Mueller can make his systematic petitions for monies to run his various orphanages and credit every return to the same account. The China Inland Mission can refuse to organize its finances under committee or board and depend on voluntary and unsolicited offerings,—depend, that is to say, on the returns from the office of prayer. I am not hinting that true prayer may not secure such returns; nor am I suggesting that it is a vain exercise thus to indulge. You must suit your custom to your own feeling. But we are faced with the trenchant fact that equally pious men pray for the same results in different spheres; and to one the results are given, to the other not. The most serious prayer ever uttered on this earth was negatived to its last syllable. Jesus prayed, "Let this cup pass from me." He had to drink it. But He also prayed, "Not my will, but thine be done," and the answer to this was a glorious vindication of divine love and divine sacrifice.

Look at the matter from another angle. Prayer is not a short line to the goal. When the Czar of Russia



projected a railway from Petrograd to Moscow, he appointed engineers to draw up the plans. They were submitted to him, showing how this mountain, that lake, must be avoided; how this river depression formed the best line of travel and offered the least cost in construction. When the engineers had finished their recital, he took a ruler and drew a straight line between the two cities, saying, "Build it by that route." Men are seeking the short-cut in the fulfillment of their prayers. They do not see at first, they have to learn that natural law and human temperament, the course of history, and the fitness of men to receive,—these must enter into the account. Every answer to prayer is a balance of forces. When the church prays for the kingdom of God to come, it would be foolish indeed to expect a sudden conversion of mankind; the sudden uprooting of old religious habits in China, where they have difficulty enough in planting the simplest ideas of popular government; the destruction of caste in India; the crushing of lust in Turkey, and the defeat of arrant selfishness throughout the whole earth. Is there a definite short-cut to that goal? If men think that it and it only should be followed, I do not wonder at their despair. What else could you expect, in view of the fact that Jesus taught that His kingdom came by quiet growth and not by violence, that is, by the explosion of a dynamite charge?

Nevertheless, the prayers of the church will be answered. The imperial word of the Lord is set to the promise. We should like to know what impression the text made on its first hearers. If you had sat at the table that evening and observed the despised Master with no political strength and no religious retinue, heard His statement that whatever was asked in His

name should be done, would incredulity or downright faith in face of contrary facts have overtaken your mind? What could He do to win the judgment of mankind? What power had He to issue the edicts of heaven? And yet His promise is: "I will do it; I will bring the prayer to its proper consummation and make the petitioners sure that they have not mistaken my power." How? A skeptical world has asked it ever since. How? The church has sought for explanation and has not always been certain of her grounds. But there the promise stands, and we have not the least doubt that it has been verified a thousand, a million times in the life of the world. Let us get the divine point of view.

The union of the heart of the disciple with his Lord's is the first token of success. That ancient adage, "One with God is a majority," has its realization in every crucial test of Christian service. On no other assumption can we explain the serene and confident hope of many a troubled heart. Savonarola goes to the stake with unblanched face; he knows his Lord's ability to take care of him. Paton seeks the sodden pagans of the South Sea, expecting nothing but death, cruel, brutal death at their hands. Prayer stays him in every emergency. The mind of the worker is one with the mind of God. Put the two together, and the request which expresses the mind's wish will be the echo of the Lord's desire for the world.

Again, this united purpose is a spiritual, not worldly aim. The Jews supposed that God wished for them a national glory, by which His Name might be honored among the nations. Hence, they could not take in the spiritual message of the Galilean Teacher. The church at times seems bound by a worldly type of

ambition, as though the dominance of politics or control of secular education might best inure to the success of the divine kingdom. Jesus' idea was other than this. The church's idea can only prevail when the spiritual tone is heard in every part of her service. It is our business, then, to pray for a spiritual change in life. We shall get no answer in anything else. Let us dwell on this in our closest meditation.

Finally, we remember that eternity, not time, is the field of operation. The masters of men are bothered by the specter of expiring time. Time is for slaves, not for spirits. We are amazed at the infinitude of time required to develop the lion from its primordial germ. Nature knows nothing of the narrowing limits of years. Shall nature's Lord suffer His plans to lapse, because they are not finished when the year ends? Take, for example, that recurring problem of church unity. The prayer is, "That they may be one," a prayer made by the Holy Christ Himself just before He suffered. Hardly had the church been founded, ere dissensions broke out, and they have continued to this day and shall persist so long as the church remains in her visible state. But must the prayer be cast into the limbo of wrecked petitions? Is not the answer being already framed? When we remember into how many discordant divisions Islam and Hinduism and Buddhism are broken, why should we be surprised at the few that dot our horizon? Without question the feeling for betterment is even now rising. Men are asking how we may heal the breaches and form in the open a united Christianity. There is plenty of time for unification; there is already at hand a deep unity, deeper than government, than creed, than form of worship; there is a unity of faith; there is a oneness of

purpose; there is a sublime abandon of common love that betokens the moving of God's Spirit. Let us pray in the Holy Name that the unity may be ever more plainly realized.

I have finished. My desire is to exalt the Name which is above every name. I bid you to repeat its sacred syllables, to use it in your prayers, to follow its intent, and weave its ideals into your life. 'Tis thus that you reach your goal; 'tis thus that you verify the promise. Listen to a simple tale. When Gilbert à Becket went to Palestine as a crusader, he fell a prisoner into the hands of a native prince. Wretched, alone, in a foreign land, his misery was observed by the lord's daughter, who taught him some of her language and taught him also the mystery of love. Aided by her ingenuity he made good his escape, exacting from her the promise that she would follow him to England and enter his home as his wife. One phrase only she learnt: "Becket, London." In the course of time, when her affection could no longer be restrained, she fled by night and took passage with an English merchantman, which brought her to the shores of Britain, the country of her beloved. Once on land at Dover she started for the city, her only direction being, "London, à Becket." Slowly, with pain, she struggled on, till she stood at the city's gates. Her Oriental dress and strange tongue elicited now the jeers, now the pity of the multitude, and with the curious feeling native to no clime they accompanied her till at their bidding she stood before his house. She knocked, she called, she waited. Could he be there? would he hear her voice? was the love as deep, as decisive, as when they parted by the Syrian shore? A step was heard, a bounding step; the accents of the

beloved voice had penetrated to the rooms within. He heard, he recognized, he ran, he embraced her. They entered, and the door was shut.

This was the mother of Thomas à Becket, who by the recitation of a name won her heart's desire.

## IX

### THE DIVINE ATTORNEY

*John 14:16, 17. "He shall give you another Comforter . . . even the Spirit of truth."*

THE doctrine of the Holy Spirit belongs to the New Testament revelation. It is foreshadowed in a dim and meager way at creation; in the transactions of the prophets it is faintly apprehended. The divine Spirit could not be really known until the divine Son had done His work. Then the acquaintance began. Christian thought has dwelt with amazing eagerness on the theme. Who is this Spirit? What relation does He bear to the supreme Father? Whence does He come, and by what path? Does He proceed from the Father singly or from both Father and Son? What is the nature of His office, and how many gifts does He impart to men? These are questions that have enthralled and sometimes cursed the church. Great cleavages have been wrought into the fabric of truth by different attitudes towards the doctrine. To-day, two churches each purporting to possess the true revelation stand apart, because of one Latin word. And yet, with it all the believing heart has found in the doctrine its highest support. We cannot give up the secret ministry of grace. We accept at face value the prayer of Jesus that God would bestow another Comforter, whose residence on earth was to be permanent.



Let us think on the character and the work of the Holy Spirit, as embodied in this verse.

## I

Our imagination is at once fixed by the name which the Lord assigns, the Comforter, or as better translated, the Advocate. It would be difficult to measure the influence of this word on the affections of the church. Men in deep trouble have found in its syllables the accents of hope. Saints on the wings of joy borne aloft by a mystic experience have felt the inward thrill of strength. Workers amid the clamors of service have sought help, sought wisdom, sought refreshing stimulus from its familiar tones. We would not rob the word of its historic meaning; we dare not separate the church from her age-long faith. It seems almost like sacrilege to suggest a change in translation. So intimately are these letters entwined with the heart-strings of love, that the most exact revisers have not ventured to substitute the better term, lest some humble trust should be imperiled. The word has been in the Fourth Gospel since the time of Wickliffe, and a holy reverence has gathered about it. But the idea in the English word has changed. Then it meant "to impart strength"; now it means to visit sympathy upon another. Then it was fairly near the meaning of the Evangelist; now it shares only one of the subsidiary meanings. The primary picture of the word has been lost in translation, and I intend to restore it. John, the writer, was close to the nomenclature of his day. He understood what Jesus said in the private discourse of the upper room, and he knew, too, how to embody that thought in the sacred language of the church. Moreover, in his first letter he used the very

word as referring to Christ, and translators are unanimous in rendering it by the word which we propose for our text.

“Paraclete” was a term in ancient law equivalent to our modern solicitor or attorney. He was an officer in court whose plea was usually on the side of the defendant. The distinguished orator at Athens has left on record a study of the immense personal influence enjoyed by public pleaders. They always appeal to the fancy of the people, because they stand at times between the innocent and an unjust sentence. Famous in annals of legal procedure is the oration of Cicero on behalf of Archias, which all schoolboys love to read (because it is so easy). The Greek poet is accused of securing his citizenship by illegal means. Cicero rises to his defense. The plea is not simply a personal one; it is a challenge to the state to recognize the value of letters, the luster of literary names, and the incentive of true fame as a motive for right living. It is as an advocate, a paraclete, that Cicero lifts his voice in the Roman senate and pleads for justice. The term passed into common speech, and even into the language of religious philosophy. For example, Philo seizes upon it to express his idea of a mediator through whom the Father of the Universe imparts His abundant blessings to mankind; and the Jewish professors taking over the very word declare that mercy and righteousness are a soul's best advocate in heaven.

The Holy Spirit, then, is called an attorney for the believer. Would that the men of courts and law who have a right to this official name might realize the solemn significance attaching to it! Let us see how clearly the character of the attorney is repeated on an infinite scale in the Person of the Paraclete.

First, the legal adviser is acquainted with law. He must be or he cannot be recorded as a member of the bar. Law for him is the settled system of social order guaranteed and enforced by the state. It is registered in custom, constitution, or statute. It is his business to interpret the law in respect of individual persons and single events. He must know what law applies to his client's case and how to put the case before the judge so as to get most favorable returns. The parallel is precise. Christ calls the divine Spirit the "Spirit of truth." He comes into human hearts with a perfect knowledge of justice and a profuse endowment of love. His treatment of sin and foible is not partial. Justice fails oftentimes in civil courts, whether for want of insight or because of prepossession. No soul gets more or less than its share of attention from the divine Attorney. No case is misrepresented. You do not find an extravagant and expensive defense for pampered interests and a lame, half-hearted trial when a poor man has to pay the bill. Truth is the watchword of the holy Paraclete, divine truth handled by a divine Mind. God brings to bear the sweep of His infallible judgment on the case of a troubled soul.

Again, the Advocate is, as his name shows, one called to the side of the defendant. It is a voluntary relation. In some countries the accused may plead his own cause, may state what the facts are in his opinion, what rights he acted on in his conduct which is now called in question, and what he thinks should be the decision. On the other hand, he may be represented by counsel. If so, the engagement is at his own instance; he must take the first step. I find an illustration here of the sovereignty of the human soul. We have been plagued with a set of theological ideas that

corrupt the will and dethrone our manhood. The purpose has been to lift up the scepter of divine power; the issue has been to cast suspicion on the noblest creation of God's hand. A man can decide his own destiny; a man must decide it. If you are willing to throw away your personal power and just drift on the uneven seas of providential regard, you may do so. I will not. But with all my determination of will I am aware that I cannot reach the harbor of perfect truth without some help. I seek for advice. I search my own heart and find a plentitude of purpose but no force at hand to turn it into fact. I search the Book of inspiration and make a profound discovery. There is a Power, not my own, which transmutes purpose into performance. I appeal to this Power; I engage Him as my counselor. In the gigantic struggle against evil I put my case in His hands. Just as the man who stands indicted on a serious charge I pass over all papers, facts, hopes, and fears to Him; I rest myself on His activity. He represents me before the bar of an accusing world. I believe this to be what Jesus meant by the glorious title which He ascribed to the Spirit of truth.

But we have not finished. The attorney becomes responsible for the conduct of the case and the verdict. His client depends on his skill in arguing the matter before judge or jury, selecting the right points for emphasis, adducing the right points in law, touching the temperamental eccentricities of the court, and if the case be one of flagrant injustice rebuking with scathing words the men or forces that brought the action. This is the duty of the attorney, and this duty the divine Advocate has assumed. We do not detract from His dignity by such a symbol; nay, we exalt it. The believer is frequently unable to defend him-

self personally against the taunts of worldly men. Indeed, the time will come to each of us as it came to John the Baptist, to Luther and Knox, when we shall not be able to tell whether we are in the wrong or not; when we shall begin to accuse ourselves in line with the accusation of a vengeful world. Then the divine Attorney steps to the bar and pleads for us. Then we note the fire in His words and the superlative eloquence of His tones. It is not for nought that He has accepted our retainer. He will fight for us, that is, for the spark of truth and honor and right in our souls. He will take the wavering John Huss and plant the seeds of eternal courage in his soul. Let fires burn and stakes be made erect; what cares the valiant heart for whom the Holy Solicitor has pled? You may rack the body, with Inquisitorial cruelty or dance the soul over the steaming pit of hell; we have no fear, so long as our Counselor holds in His hand an infallible brief and defends us against a malignant foe.

Take still another fact. The lawyer is entitled to his fees. He is about the only citizen who is sure of his compensation beyond a doubt. It may be involved in the rendering of a judgment for damages; and that judgment cannot be passed out of the court's hands until the defending attorney has received his share. Let us not deal lightly with the suggestion. The parallel is again exact. I delight in the truth it covers. The Holy Spirit will not fail to collect His compensation. If God gives you redemption through His Son, if He develops the powers of mind and spirit, if He guarantees you a place in the world to come, are you to furnish nothing in return? I honor the heroic abnegation of the young Edinburgh student who faced death as the result of a sudden accident. Urged to



make ready for the great change, he cried out: "I have lived all my life for my own pleasure; and shall I give the dregs of it to God?" I ask you, my friends, can you accept the unstinted mercies of heaven, the sunshine, the thrill of health, the joys of friendship, the peace of forgiven sin, and then do nothing to show your gratitude? No, the Solicitor's fee must be paid. I leave it to you to say how it shall be met. Paul had no hesitation in assessing the costs and paying them. "Ye shall live," he exclaims, "if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body." A blanket fee indeed, the most sweeping we can make. It means the putting away of the vanities, the pleasures, the excesses of bodily indulgence. It means that you cannot wear fine clothes just for the sake of exhibiting them, or play your games just for the sake of having a little fun, or winning the stakes; or tip the glass just for the sake of getting a momentary exhilaration. It means that if the Spirit has defended you before an unfriendly world, you are expected to champion His maxims in the face of a social sneer or even in front of an uplifted sword. That is Paul's way of meeting an honorable obligation, and I can assure you, nothing but it will gain for you the commendation of a divine Lord.

## II

We return to the assertion of the text, "He shall give you another Comforter." Let us now stress the word "another." It opens a new avenue of inquiry. The divine Attorney does not stand alone; He is indissolubly associated with a Precursor. It was said of John that he came in the spirit of Elijah, with a rugged message to an age of religious indolence and with a



fearless advocacy of right. It is now said that when the Paraclete comes, he shall be another Christ. The value of the thought to Christian theology is clear; we can determine just what kind of a Person the Holy Spirit is. We have thus far studied Him theoretically; we are now at liberty to ascribe to Him definite traits, moral traits, I mean, personal characteristics that come first to view when you attempt to write the story of a life. The manner of emulation must be observed. It is not the action of a mere copyist; nor is it the unconscious replication of another's mannerisms, which forms the conspicuous lines of so many careers. It is subject to proof that notable men leave behind them a number of kindred spirits, who have insensibly wrought in the same fashion. It is an open secret that John Marshall's method of interpreting law has been followed by the greatest legal minds since his day. It is conceded that Webster's treatment of legal questions, his grand oratorical style, his personal presence exerted an inescapable charm over the less brilliant men of his profession. Imitation is one of the deep-seated, enfibred passions of the human heart.

But the divine Spirit is not "another Comforter" in the sense that He copies the style of Christ. He does not, so to speak, sit down before the life of the holy Jesus, as a student sits before the canvas of an old master, and reproduce one by one the acts of the Lord in His "training of the twelve." The Holy Spirit is not another Person in that sense. He is not set off from the Other in the same way that two men are. A son may be extremely like his father in look, carriage, speech, and mode of thought. Yet they remain forever two distinct personalities. The divine Spirit and the divine Son are so related that both work together, and

you cannot in their work discover which is preponderatingly to the front. It is useless to frame dogmas that affirm the utter separateness of the Persons of the Godhead. They break down at the words of Jesus in this Chapter:—"I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you"; "the Comforter, whom the Father will send in my name," that is, bearing my power and conveying my thought. The meaning certainly is this:—Christ and the Holy Spirit are two expressions of the same power, each one an Alter Ego to the other. When you talk with the Spirit, you talk with Christ; and when you talk with Christ, you talk with God. The series returns on itself, and we find the unit God whom we are bound to worship and to love.

This being true, the action of the Paraclete may be illustrated by the service of Jesus. Did the Lord ever reveal Himself as an Attorney for His friends? Let us turn to the Gospels for our information. No intelligent reader can accuse Jesus of being a partisan. He fulfilled the true duty of solicitor by caring for His client's interests. He defended the men of His company from the implied slander of the Pharisees. They said, "Why do these disloyal Galileans violate the common law of Judaism by plucking ears of corn on the Sabbath? Are they not aware that this is a form of work, and all work is forbidden on the holy day?" The charge was a mere quibble and sprang from the empty formalism of the day. Jesus took up the defense in short order and taught the self-righteous critics a salutary lesson. What can be holy save that which God has sanctified? Days, years, persons, objects get their color only from the ideas you inject into them. Obey the spirit of the law, and the letter will take care of itself. Thus Jesus defended His friends, and thus

the divine Spirit has been challenging ever since the complacent devotees of form, as against the quiet souls who walk in the light of eternal truth.

Next, Jesus defended His friends from the depression of their own minds. I have said that the true heart more than once falls a victim to the delusion that perhaps the world's judgment is right, and ours is wrong. Look at the moment in Jesus' ministry, when the crowds began to turn their backs on Him. It was a moment instinct with crisis. The men at His side were on the point of wavering. You cannot blame them. The ruling class had already pronounced against Him; their own minds were not satisfied with His Messianic credentials. And yet to whom could they go, if they abandoned Him? He seemed to have the words of life, and this was the end of their quest. It was then that the Lord defended them against their own hesitation, defended them by a patient, loving companionship, worked over them, not by argument, not by repeated appeal, just let them breathe again the free breath of His own profound fellowship, just let them have a second glimpse of His acquaintance with God. It is thus the sacred Comforter deals with us; deals with us patiently, quietly, as a father with his wayward boy.

We cannot always detect the subtle plea He makes. We sometimes think ourselves alone when we are enveloped with saving grace. I remember the case of a distinguished minister whose boy had grown restive under the parental roof. He longed for the street, for the freedom of other company, where men let go the profane word when they pleased, or indulged in the deed of passion, if the whim took them. One day he left his home with a furtive look but a high hope; he

would see the world for himself. Whither he should go, he had not the slightest idea. He started out alone, unseen, as he supposed. But the watchful eye of his father saw him, and a cautious step pursued. For hours he tramped alone on the thoroughfares of that great city,—till night came on. Then the step grew slower and shoulders were bowed. An occasional moan escaped his lips. This his father could hear, for he had drawn near in the darkness. At last the boy stopped, and sobs shook his frame; alone, alone, away from the home he loved. Why did he ever wish to be free from the gentle restraint of loving parents? His mother—how dear she became, now many miles away; his father, whose firm words he had resented,—would he not gladly sit again at his knee and listen to his counsel? What should he do, where should he go? He was in despair. Just then, the kindly hand is on his shoulder, and the beloved arm about him, and into his ears the father almost broken-hearted pours a stream of precious words, not made for your hearing, or mine. And there they two, father and son, in the gathered dusk kneel and pray, plight the new and holier troth that together they will do the will of God.

My friend, the Comforter, gentle Solicitor to the soul, pours into your ears the story of a mightier love, against which you have fought, to which you may now submit with a heart's obeisance.

### III

I have detailed the official character of the Spirit of truth, the divine Attorney, and His likeness to the Lord of glory. It remains now to set forth His methods of work. Where does He hold court? Is it His

duty to appear before God and champion the cause of the saints? Or does He meet the attacks of evil-minded men and rebuke them in the court of the world? Dr. Westcott, the able expounder of this Gospel, adopts the latter, and I am glad to agree with him. It is as though a battle royal were pitched, a legal tourney, on the one side the great Accuser, whom John saw in the last Assize, and on the other, the Christian's friend whom Jesus named the "Advocate." Let us enter the somber chambers where the debate is continually in progress.

I think we shall hear first the charge that the church is an utter failure. The charge will be made specific. It will state that never in all its long and strenuous history has the church succeeded in constructing a single perfect character. It will affirm that the type of doctrine has never been perfectly consistent; that throughout the wide spaces of Christendom there is not one dogma that commands the assent and devout loyalty of the entire church. It will point out the divisions in the body of Christ, the bitter contentions, the religious wars, the bloody arenas, where deeds of violence have been foully done, the persecutions instituted by one group of disciples against another, the unseemly rivalry today as between supposed brethren, and the trivial differences that separate men bearing the same Name and honoring the same Lord. It will set forth the apparent inadequacy of the church to stem the tide of commercialism or allay the threats of war; the slow and unequal battle it is waging with the errors of heathenism; the greater fidelity and more aggressive campaign conducted at this moment by the Mohammedan hosts; the general impracticableness of its ideals, and withal the growing indifference, so it



says, within the ranks of the church to the really spiritual purpose of religion. The charge is a serious one; it is flanked by facts that we may not blink even though they can be readily explained. It is urged by men and movements, by institutions and opposing religions. Dark days fall upon the heart of the church, and some of its warmest champions begin to feel, we ought not to be so certain in our conviction that Christ will conquer the world.

It is then that the Spokesman for the church arises. It is then that a new, a searching Voice is heard in the halls of the world's debate. It is then that the answer preparing from eternity rolls through the corridors of time. The divine Attorney speaks. The enemies of the truth are hushed to silence. Not with shafts of magic, not with Jove's mythic blade of flame, not with torrents of argument, not with the downfall of cherished institutions—not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit, by the marvel of grace, is the word of heaven recorded. On Pentecost the Champion of truth spoke His word, and three thousand sinners fell. In the dull and leaden atmosphere of the Middle Ages the voice again was heard, and nations hastened to be born under the revolutionary doctrine of faith. England steeped her mind in the dialectics of Deism; natural passions ran unchecked through her lanes and streets; glorious cathedrals were only training-grounds for man-made morality; till one day John Wesley lifted the standard of grace, and soon like a glowing tide the theme of Free Salvation swept into city and town, and over the seas to this Western clime, and the answer to infidelity was complete. If you wish to see what crushed, ground into powder, extinguished Tom Paine and his atheistic creed, look into the seeth-



ing meeting-house of the period, and behold the stricken sinners crying for the breath of liberty. The rebuke of the divine Attorney is always in the way of a burst of spiritual grace, a flood of conviction. If you think, we need today some new answer to the perennial charge, get down on your knees and call aloud for help. Call aloud, call with energy, call insistently, and then go to work and realize the terms of your prayer!

I think, we shall hear the charge made, too, that the church is not able to express the underlying ideas of her faith. That charge has often been made. It is made at this moment. We are asked, why Christian men and women are silent in regard to their cardinal hopes, sepulchrally, dismally silent, when persons with temporal schemes only move heaven and earth to publish abroad their peculiar views. What would it mean to the church now if a tenth part of the social magnetism wrapped up in certain groups were injected into the membership of Christian bodies? The men who call themselves Socialists are eaten up with zeal; they talk their opinions, they herald the new panaceas over the whole country, they rest not day nor night like the angels in heaven. Why should the disciples of Jesus shrink from disclosing their doctrines? It must be, either because the doctrines are worthless, or—which is just as bad—because those doctrines have failed to make any impression on their minds. Such is the accusation, laid against us in the court of the world's opinion. It is not new; it has borne the brunt of attack for nearly two millenniums. It has been exposed, perforated, reduced to splinters again and again; yet it is pieced together for further use. It was answered by Jesus in advance, when He said that no disciple

needed to write his brief; for the Spirit would tell him in the hour of persecution what he ought to say.

It was answered in Jerusalem, when Peter, a common fisherman, with no training under Gamaliel, utterly estranged from the rhetorical arts of the day, stood up before the assembled multitude and flung the winged word of conviction into the cringing heart of Jew and Gentile. It had a superb rebuttal in the career of the Apostle Paul. Here was a man endowed with every art of public persuasion. He could state and prove the proposition against the infant church. He did so in every synagogue at Jerusalem and was about to carry the war into Damascus when the infallible Attorney stood up to plead. That mighty argument is registered in the Sixth and Seventh of Romans; you may read it for yourself. The argument is long and very intricate, befitting the appeal to the learned mind of Paul. The argument was also effective; for when the sun's zenith was reached outside the Damascene walls, Saul of Tarsus gave up the case and accepted the rebuttal as a fact. If a critic insist that we have dealt only with exceptions, only with men of extraordinary power, such as genius confers on a few, let him, I say, study the instance before his eyes,—a man, steeped in the selfishness of business, a woman lured by the enticing call of pleasure, met, gripped, taught, empowered by the inward Grace; a man, a woman, startled into speech, forgetting the gauds and mockeries of the world, standing forth to preach Christ,—what is this but the Spirit's challenge to a carping world that we have in our day, too, a warmth of feeling, a prophet's desire to plead for the verities of the faith? Is it the product of an overwrought imagination? Is it the sign of some social unrest? Is it a mere revulsion of feeling

away from current indifference to religious concerns? I care not how the man of science may explain it. I know how God has brought it forth. I know that it conforms to His promise, made in the days of Joel the prophet:

“And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit on all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.”

The fact of the case is this: when the divine Advocate utters His word, He speaks by the voice of His humble servants. The voice of fearlessness, the note of triumph heard now and again in the court of the world's debate are not human but divine. Mere man cannot speak with the accents of authority; he commands attention only under the spell of a great inspiration. And that is the Spirit pleading the cause of Truth through his lips.

A little over a hundred years ago, the heart of Ireland bled for its slaughtered hero. Robert Emmet, brave in war, astute in counsel, was executed on the charge of treason. The charge was proven, for he had led the conspiracy, which was to release his native land from the domination of Great Britain. Goaded by love he returned from the mountain fastness to revisit his betrothed, when he was captured and brought to perfunctory trial. He appeared as his own advocate, and pleaded his own cause in language so pure and eloquent that few speeches in criminal practice can be compared to his.

“My Lords:—What have I to say why sentence of death should not be pronounced against me according to law? I have nothing to say that can alter your predetermination.

But I have much to say why my reputation should be rescued

from the load of false accusation and calumny which has been heaped upon it. The sentence of the law, which delivers my body to the executioner, will labor in its own vindication, to consign my character to obloquy; for there must be guilt somewhere—whether in the sentence of the court, or in the catastrophe, posterity must determine. I have but one request to ask at my departure from this world; it is the charity of silence. Let no one write my epitaph; for, as no one who knows my motives dare *now* vindicate them, let no prejudice or ignorance asperse them. Let them and me repose in obscurity and peace, and my tomb remain uninscribed, until other times and other men can do justice to my character. When my country shall take her place among the nations of the earth, then, and not till then, let my epitaph be written."

Not Robert Emmet, but the spirit of Irish Freedom, spoke in these noble sentences. Apart from love of country such words, such deeds could not have been produced.

In that higher inspiration when men catch the fire of God and truth is the shining steel of victory, whatever men speak, whatever men do shall be the Spirit's witness to undying faith, and the test of truth will be men's unflinching obedience to the heavenly call.

## X

### THE INEPTITUDE OF THE WORLD FOR SPIRITUAL TRUTH

*John 14:17. "The Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive; because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him."*

**T**RUTH is the object of imperishable interest to noble souls. To one, it is a flaming beacon soaring in the sky, inviting the spiritual mariner to a confident hope in its guidance. To another, it is the pearl reposing on the bed of the deep, of priceless worth, elusive, rare, and only to be found after the most inveterate search. Truth has its variant forms, rich in color and electric with power. To one age, it is embodied in a fact, and the imperial scepter is its stern symbol upon whose golden stem the idea of law is inscribed. For another age, it is summed up in a creed, a code of religious thought sealed and clamped by the hand of authority. Yet another era sees truth in the chemistry of the atom and nowhere else. Its infinitesimal aspect we must examine, if we would reach the heart of truth. Thus, truth from one point of view is "all things to all men."

In the mind of Jesus, however, truth had a solitary relation. He dealt with no truth save that which sprang at once from the being of God. The acute speculations of wise men, even the superb adumbrations of theoretic truth as found in the Epic of His own literature did not engage His thought. He saw straight

through the riven heaven to the Father and caught up that truth, which the Spirit on wings of revelation was at length to lodge in the hearts of men.

We consider in this verse :

1. The truth presented to the world; and
2. The ineptitude of the world to receive it.

# I

It were vain to attempt a definition of truth. Every such attempt involves the maker in a hopeless tangle. He carries at best no clearer light than the ancient Cynic, who went about the streets with his lantern looking for an honest man. Yet certain secure lines are recorded in the spectrum of truth, just as soon as we get within the circuit of divine influence. Let us put our telescope up to the vaulted blue and gather its reflected hues.

We find at once that truth is positive and sure. I do not mean that it is fixed by some decree of court or senate. Nor do I mean that a company of savants deliberated long and earnestly on its terms, and finally agreed as to how they should be stated. Truth is not made; it is organic. Truth is vital with the vigor of reality. You would not say that life was given to the tree; it is present in the arteries of a tree, because it is a tree. Life is bound up with its organ. They used to say that a hand was not a hand, if it were dead; it was simply a piece of mouldering matter. If you wish to get at truth you must find something which is real. No body of men can make a thing real by voting it so. I observe a distinguished educator has announced his conviction that there is no heaven and there is no hell. He establishes a fact by citing his



opinion. The method will not suffice. We need something more than the testimony of one man or the concurrence of every learned society in the world. Truth is not a question of what you think but of what actually is.

Let us rise to the pinnacle of thought. What shall I say about the truth of God? That is to say, does truth mean for me that God exists in all His infinite majesty, His wisdom, His unmatched goodness; or does truth imply simply that I think of God as existing, and so dear a thought awakes the spirit of worship in me? This is not alone a query, believe me, for the man who is trained in theology. Its current is wider. He who sails the sea and battles with its hydra-headed dangers must know the import of my question. He who deals with the common elements of business, who realizes the perishableness of goods and the fatuity of ambition, he must know, if there be a God; or every sanction of right will be shivered. And every man who stoops beneath the load of sorrow, enters his Gethsemane and sees no light ahead, shall surely sink into Stygian darkness, if the glowing light of divine Love be not in his spiritual sky. Truth is not a matter of opinion; truth is eternally fixed. For the man, for the child, for the brute savage, for the Chesterfields of human culture, truth is always one. It depends on no convention; it is vocalized by no particular school. It cannot be changed by the most radical discoveries of science. It will not be silenced by dogma, though couched in the most bewitching tones. It has the sting of eternity in it and cannot be disarmed.

We take up a second aspect of truth and penetrate deeper into the heart of Christ. Truth for Him was ever personal. It could not be divorced from the life

of spirit. So high a theme He enshrined in His unequaled definition of God, a "spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." Spirit and truth are welded into one. They are but reverse sides of the shield of divine personality. Jesus thus thought of truth as being breathed out of spirit. He did not teach His disciples in the abstract and vague terms of philosophy. Truth to Him was not abstract; it was the most definite thing conceivable. He did not set the sins of men on one side of an equation and the mercy of God on the other, and then prove them to be interchangeable. He said, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save, that which was lost." He did not show up the blank vacuity of the Galilean mind and then expound the infinite reaches of truth. He said, "When He, the spirit of truth is come, he shall guide you into all truth." Truth is hence a most practical matter. It deals with problems that face the soul. It is not written alone on rock and hillside or animal tissue or the lobes of the brain. Truth is there, and modern science has extracted its meaning to the everlasting benefit of the race. For all scientific truth has practical value. The naturalist, of course, does not follow up his clues just for the sake of arriving at results that may be of use to his fellow-men. The disinterested pursuit of knowledge is its first concern. Still, when electric energy can be chained, geared, reduced to service, and in a moment of great emergency save hundreds of lives from a watery grave by its unwired currents, then we say that truth is more than theory; it has the heaven-born gift of being useful to lives that can appreciate its meaning.

I conceive truth to be of this form, the truth, that is, which girds and redeems the soul. I regard truth

as the one force, which excites to action the moral qualities of the heart. Truth does not act on flesh and blood; flesh and blood cannot enter the kingdom of God. The challenge of Holy Writ is straightforward. It will not countenance any idea of the soul that makes it a mere complex of organic forces. Do you think you really live because the heart beats and the lungs respire, because the nerves react and the brain responds to suggestion? Is intelligence the combination of certain gases? Is conscience the register of physical pains and pleasures, and nothing more? Does immortality become an illusive dream in view of the stern dissolution of the body's elements? Truth lays the finger of hope on the soul. It does more; it begets an undying conviction. It is wrapped up in the heavenly Spirit, and having so high a heritage it surely could not be content to play here on the perishing particles of earth.

The point is clear: if we are going to receive truth, we must receive it with our spiritual nature. Let us take an example. I am weighted with a sense of responsibility. I believe that I ought to do a certain thing. The case is perfectly plain to me. Duty lies upon me like a terrible burden. I cannot explain it by reference to the customs of the race; it might be an instance, when the race did not agree with me. We will say, the duty has to do with some act that may cost the life. Every racial prompting says: "Save your life, don't give it away. Life is precious; you owe to family and friend to preserve it intact." But the conviction refuses to yield; happiness departs from my mind; the lights of earth grow dim, unsatisfying; I lose my appetite and dwindle in flesh; I am mentally almost on the edge of despair. Then I determine to

obey the inner voice. The whole horizon is lighted with a supernal glow, contentment reigns, life assumes a new and more benevolent aspect. I brave the dangers of a consecrated life, and if I surrender the encasement I have my soul left to me uninjured. I have done my duty. That I take to be truth in the moral sphere. You may not be able to define its parts; nor may you analyze successfully the stimulus it exerts. But you know this, that until its terms were obeyed life for you was not worth its spark.

Let me avail myself of this opportunity to say that Christian truth has in it a driving-wheel of great power. It sets in motion the sluggish affections of the soul. It grinds off the rust, that has gathered on the nobler habits. It draws behind it a load of weaker souls that in themselves apparently have no "will to do." Such is truth, as entertained by religious minds and held, as I think, by the Lord Himself.

We take another step forward. Truth we declare to be unchanging, and truth we regard as fitted to the uses of our mind. But how shall this truth find its place within our breasts? The problem is age-long and has never but once been answered satisfactorily. It has its peculiar difficulties, and we dare not despise them. I do not intend to consider the matter in a trifling way. No man has a right to dismiss the question of revelation either as easily solved or as unworthy serious thought. Truth comes to us by the medium of mind; this is the first difficulty; and the second is like unto it: the mind can reveal its contents only by language. Thought that you see written on the face is of little consequence; it is subject to a hundred interpretations. We need a spoken medium. But words may bear different meanings. And when you

translate the ideas from one language to another you increase the difficulty in proportion.

Let us take up the latter fact first. Did you ever realize what a grave situation you accept, when you try to repeat another's statement? You have to reproduce not only his words and the ideas they embody; you are obliged to set up again his state of mind, the intention behind the words, the manner of life that is reflected in his motives; that is to say, the very man himself. It is no facile task, then, to interpret your neighbor's words. We know how stale and pointless our rehearsal of a great orator's address is. Try to read Mr. Lincoln's words at Gettysburg, charged with the honesty of a great life and the holy sorrows of a stricken nation, and you see what an impossible task is yours. I can understand nothing less than this as the duty of Peter and John and Paul and the other Apostolic men, who were appointed to write down the wholesome truths of revelation. Language fails to take up the stream of truth into its channel. Truth has too much of the fecund turbulence of heaven in it. And yet this is the very thing they had to do. Do you wonder that Paul cries out in utter desperateness of the truth's profusion: "That ye may be able to comprehend . . . the love of Christ, which passes comprehension" !

Then, there is the difficulty of the use of the mind as a medium for revelation. How can the mind be the storehouse of infallible truth? We know how pale is our interpretation of the evidence of God about us. Let men study the beauty of a flower; some like Linnaeus will bow their heads and worship. Others will dissect its beauty away and sternly resolve it into its class. Let men view the movements of human life.



A giant ship goes down amid a sea of ice, carrying to unnamed graves a vast multitude of precious souls. How do you understand the religious import? It will be written down in the records as an "act of God." Is the lesson that confronts us not only one of possible carelessness but also the deeper one, that after all we are in the hollow of His hand, as a cartoon strikingly shows? Still greater difficulties are met when we enter the field of revelation. We do not see how truth can get into the incapacious minds of men; we do not see how God can support His divinity within the narrow confines of a human body; we are loath to admit that a cruel Cross may bear the weight of the world's sin; we stand unconvinced before the riven cave, and hear with unresponsive hearts that life and immortality have issued therefrom.

Nevertheless, the Christian scheme makes this Book a Book of authority, because it enfolds the truth. The sequence is this: first the truth, then the authority that truth carries, and lastly, truth and authority dwelling together in a Book. Let me illustrate. Sin as a fact has always been on the platform of history. The truth as to the meaning of sin is crystallized in this Book alone. Ideas of all shades of gravity have clustered about the word. It has meant a physical defect, a lack of knowledge, a stage in racial development, which will one day be passed by, disobedience to the established rules of society, some violation of the moral sense which has been gradually mortised into the mind of the race. The Bible rejects every one, and holds that sin is a direct revolt against the law of God. The truth of sin is now revealed and that revelation brings a mighty burden to the minds of men. It unfolds the seriousness of sin; it shows us that we cannot cover



it with the expedients so triumphantly pursued by uninspired religions. Sin stares us in the face with a haunting look of despair. But how does its truth reach the heart? By the divine Word which we call the Bible. Follow the course of this Book's influence. See it, as the wonders of art spring from its magnetic atmosphere; see it, as it lays the fangs of truth upon the strongest governments of earth; mark its majestic tread, as monarchs of mental power fall in abject surrender before its message. This is truth, streaming from a Book; truth with unflinching loyalty to itself; truth with the will of God behind it. This is the truth that Jesus came to reveal, and this the eternal truth which the Spirit of truth forces upon the attention of mankind.

## II

The second part of the text deals with the reception of truth by the world. It marks a cleavage in the destiny of souls. No man can ever be the same, after he has passed under the shadow of the Cross, just as no metal can pass through a magnetic field without evincing its peculiar character. It either suffers attraction, or it does not. Calvary is the critical point for human life. Love which is sceptered there will excite a profound devotion or an embittered defiance. Our Saviour was quite aware of the divisive tendency of His truth. Even at the term of His earthly ministry, on the verge of His exaltation, when the glorious Figure of the Risen Christ stood before dazzled eyes, it is recorded that they "worshipped him, but some doubted." He was aware of a latent incapacity for belief in the minds of many. Truth and worldly assent do not go together. Chemists seek in vain to mingle certain prim-

itive elements; they cannot mix oil and water. Botanists labor zealously to acclimatize the products of the upper zones in the soil of the tropics; they meet nothing but reproof from an unwilling nature. We have heard of mystical minds, that are immune to scientific demonstration; they must go to the goal by the path of insight, or not at all. We have come in touch perhaps with practical souls to whom the rhythm, the color, the playful fancy of poetry is a foreign substance; they cannot take it in. The bent in each case is the work of nature, or once in a while the result of a faulty education. The bent of the unspiritual man is the bent of nature, confirmed by a voluntary pursuit of unspiritual ends. It can be cured, while the dissidence of chemical elements is perpetual; but it will only be cured, after the heart has gone down into the valley of rigid examination under the guidance of the divine Spirit. We are now concerned not with the change but with the natural bent.

It is clear from the words of Jesus that the untempered soul cannot see. We shall not venture to read the habits of a scientific age into the mind of Jesus. And yet it is perfectly safe to say that the kind of sight here intended is that of the body. The eye is one of the most important instruments for the study of nature. Astronomy as an exact science would be impossible, if the faculty of sight did not bring the message of the stars within the range of investigation. So central to right thinking is the eye considered by many, that one of the most effective workers in British philosophy began his tasks with a study of the eye and its vision. This means, that all truth, for the man of science, must have for its touchstone the evidence of the senses. There is no truth for him apart from the

hard facts which the nerves of the body record. I think, we may pass directly from the seething laboratory of the chemist into the melting-room of his religion, and find the same rules applied in both. Spiritual truth does not deserve treatment different from that we give to the awards of consciousness. If it gets anything else, it is not fit to be called truth but mere opinion. Such is the attitude described by Christ in His searching words. Let us see how inexorably true they are.

Well, we meet at once the fact that the eye can take in material substance and nothing beyond it. You can see the body of a man, but not his soul. Various experimenters have tried to get a photograph of the soul, so to speak. They have found a kind of light-ring girdling the body, a magnetic effusion, and this they have called the contour of the soul. I do not care to define my spirit. There is no serviceable end to be gained. It is like unto the divine Spirit, for we are made in His image. I am content to let the case rest there. But whatever the soul may be, it is to us so incontestibly clear that it cannot be viewed as matter is viewed. To speak of a "beautiful soul," as some poets do, is to misjudge its nature and confine its prospects. The soul of Robert Browning may be beautiful in the sense that it was fitted with the noble traits of wisdom, insight, sympathy, and profound religious conviction. It was not beautiful in the sense that you could examine it as you examined the body in which it reposed.

For this reason the untaught mind cannot look through the eyes of the body into the Holy Spirit. No man can see God. If you decline to believe in Him, because your physical senses give you no image, then

you will never reach His side. He will be only a myth, endowed, indeed, with the plastic attributes that fancy or fervor has conceived, and yet just a myth! Oh, if Reason could stand unashamed, anointed, in the presence of the King; if she could understand how vain are her rigorous formulas, her canons of truth, her methods of inquiry; if she could once catch the glint of imperial wisdom shining down the corridors of time,—how simple would the truth of God then seem, and with what quickened footstep would she run to meet the advances of the star-lit Spirit, who has promised to lead into all truth!

I am reminded, again, that sight is after all an imperfect instrument for research. It sees one side of the case. Look, for instance, at yonder house and suppose that you have no other means for filling out the details. What idea would you get of the object? You might see three corners of the building but could not possibly see the fourth. If you stood on the ground near the house, you could not tell what was the composition of the roof. The interior is entirely hid from your sight, if the windows be closed. You could merely guess how many rooms there were, and their several locations. In fact, the knowledge gained by the organ of sight is extremely limited. I think the Lord has this in mind as He recites the ineptitude of the world for spiritual truth. We do get a hint of truth, here and there. It would be folly to hold that the natural man lived absolutely a stranger to the motions of honor or right. Certain virtues seem to grow luxuriantly in soils unfertilized by Christian grace. Courage, the finest human quality in ancient Rome, sometimes finds the heart of a Christian a shabby place to live in. But while this is true, we must not overlook a greater

fact that the roundness of virtue cannot be discovered apart from the sanctifying influence of truth. Love, sacrificial, self-abnegating love, is at home in the Christian heart, and in none other. And since love is the fulfilling of the law, if that be absent other virtues soon sink into fatigue.

I am reminded, too, that sight is uncertain and at last fails altogether. If you want to find out how uncertain and hence untrustworthy sight is, take a piece of ground and measure it off four or five times. Each time the result will be different and you will come away a disappointed but a wiser man. Now such being the case, how, we ask, can the eye or its faculty of vision be a proper instrument for perceiving the divine truth? Or, how can the mind that directs the vision presume to clasp in its embrace the sacred oracles of God? How, in fine, may I presume to challenge the truth of the great Atonement, simply because I see the workings of grace through eyes that are accustomed to the selfish habits of earth? Yet even here we come upon evidences of substitution; strong, chivalrous manhood, yielding its place in the lifeboats, that those of lesser resource may be saved. I do not see, why with such hallowed examples before the eye we may not run up the shining way and exchanging faith for sight accept the mysteries of grace, as unfolded in the Person of the Christ.

It is clear from the words of Jesus that the uninstructed world cannot know the truth. "To know" carries us deeper into human experience than "to see." We drop now the organs of the body and enter the palladium of the mind. Here all is quiet; the diversions of sense, the constant impact of outward forces are gone. We are alone, so to speak, with the shadows



of eternity, and our duty is to turn the suspicions of the mind into living substance. Can we do it? Christ says, the world is at a standstill in this region; it cannot know. But why? The true disciple knows; for he affirms this in the closing words of the verse. What makes the crucial difference between the church and the surging world about it? I think, I can tell you. In the first place, the world is without sympathetic insight into the ways by which truth is manifested. You can see how grossly neglectful selfish man has been of certain social ideas that gradually but surely attain their flower. The idea of human equality in the sight of law is of very recent acceptance. For centuries might and not right held sway in the counsels of government. Only in sporadic cases, long separated in time and place, did the essential supremacy of the citizen secure its vindication. The world would not accept it. Can we expect aught else in the higher domain of spiritual life? How can the heart that loves its own pleasure square its habits with the undefiled holiness of God? How can the mind, charmed, excited by the ceaseless enticements of sense, curb its frenzies and settle down to a serious look at eternity? And the conscience, that silent monitor within, blurred by a thousand foibles, checkmated by passion and greed—how can it stand up and claim the reward of a righteous life? The world does not understand the ways of God and hence cannot receive His truth.

Once more, there are to the selfish heart no means of interpreting the given signs. God does not leave Himself without witness, as Paul said. You need not look to distant ages for a show of divine providence or for the promotion of eternal right by the solemn events of Time. We are girt with convincing signs in history,



if we stop to study their import. India today sees the loosening of the chains of caste. Has commerce caused it? Has the entrance of an alien political force effected the change? Has the pinch of poverty or the rise of a new social order made the difference? These have doubtless helped. But the real alchemy is in the Christian religion, which is slowly laying its transmuting power over the ancient soil of hatred, contempt, and dread. The sign is not as yet entirely clear, save for intuitive minds. The time is coming, when he alone will be unconvinced who does not wish to be.

Then, study another sign, the most powerful ever granted the human race, a sign instinct with promise, inscribed with letters of a celestial Hand and called by Christ the "sign of the Prophet Jonah." It is a symbol merely, when taken by itself. The cross carries in its crude material shape no power better or fuller than that which slept in the cup of hemlock. Safety and hope do not repose in a cross; it is the medium by which the massive truths of heaven are exposed to view. The mistake of the matter-of-fact world is that it puts the sign for the thing signified, and then complains that it cannot understand! Cover up the cross but expose the Deity that hung there. Conceal the blood-stains but dwell on the love that made them. Put away the uninviting specter of death but remember that Jesus died for the world's iniquities. Then you get the value of the Cross, and about its head gathers the light of an uninterrupted Redemption.

Can the mind of man untempered by grace reach the height of faith thus revealed? Can the world know the Cross and its undying truth, so long as it holds to its own method of interpretation? Never! Truth does

not pass through the crucible of knowledge. Truth will not dissolve into its elements at the touch of science. Truth needs faith, such faith, such surrender as Saul of Tarsus evinced, when the reasons of logic and the ceremonies of the law vanished like wisps of morning vapor before the ascending sun. Truth comes, when you face the gleaming Presence of the Saviour and commit your soul to Him. Otherwise it will be a dream.

## XI

### LIFE NOT ORIGINAL WITH MAN

*John 14:19. "Because I live, ye shall live also."*

LIFE is the one problem in the world's eye that refuses to be solved. We may not be always and altogether sure of the varying forms of mechanical power. Light and heat, chemical affinity and electric energy are children of the same natural stock; but their interrelation at times escapes the attention of the most careful observer. Still, we know them to be convertible terms. The same batteries, when properly charged, can scorch, illuminate, send the voice along the wire, or drive the heavy train. You can find out the reason by sitting down with the physicist in his laboratory and following his movements. The problem is at length simple.

But the matter of life is not simple. It has taxed the capacity of the acutest minds and is now as reticent of its secrets, as it ever was. If your informant tells you that life is only function,—material atoms acting in a certain way,—you are at liberty to ask him, Why should and must they act in precisely this way and no other? He may know their composition, their arrangement into a unitary structure, for example, the brain; but he cannot tell you how that structure begins to act nor what that subtle principle within is, by which its organic form is maintained. This is true in physical life. It is comprehensively involved in the

relations of spirit. Jesus takes up the age-long problem. He solves it. He alone has solved it. He does not unravel it by the help of argument. He states the simple connection between Himself and His disciple, and rests the case there.

I propose to determine two points:

First, the compass of spiritual life, and

Secondly, its superhuman origin.

# I

We are engaged in a difficult pursuit and need all the light that common experience can throw on our path. The analogy of life in body and life in spirit is extremely close and has been used with great freedom by Scriptural writers. We shall use it in discussing the assertion of our Lord. Let it be understood, however, that we are propounding no theory of organic energy. Our sole aim is to cut a few segments of truth out of the circle of celestial life, which we believe to be embodied in the heart of Christ.

We begin with the fact that life is an inward impulse and is not imposed upon the organism from without. You can put power into a machine but you cannot put life into a body. One very plain evidence of life is the ability to produce motion. I speak now of animal life. The motion of an organism is not the same as the motion of a stone. The direction might be the same and the curves described quite identical. But the stone comes to rest, and remains at rest until moved by an external force; while the organic body resumes its motion without any aid from a foreign object. And it resumes its motion with an end in view; it seeks food. Very rudimentary may be the

line of movement, merely this way and then that; but it has a meaning not inherent in the motion of the tiny chip caught in the eddy. It must satisfy the needs of its nutritive organ, that is to say, the demands of life.

Let us illustrate the presence of an inward impulse by a fascinating example. Examine the wonderful structure of the human eye. No more intricate mechanism was ever devised. The perfect adaptation of organ to function, of means to end, is here displayed. But of what use is this splendid equipment of cornea, tissues, lens and nerves, if there be no life behind it? A multitude of investigators have held that the function of sight has been gradually fashioned by the effect of light on the surface of the rudimentary body. Though all the facts discount the theory, suppose, for a moment, that it were true. Again, I ask, of what service would the newly determined function be, if there were no inward power to keep it going? Or, deeper than that, would the most thoroughgoing evolutionist think of inserting a faculty like sight into any object save that which already possessed life? The eye can exercise its function, simply because life courses through its delicate arteries, and because the brain fed by life sets the optic nerve in motion. Life is an inward impulse.

The analogy, as I suggested, is close. I am charged at this point with declaring that Christ is the possessor of unoriginated life. It is a theme that John, His intimate friend, loved to dwell on. He did not believe, he could not believe that spiritual power was settled on his Lord by some alien authority. He regarded Him as the Word of God, the express output of divine Life. As the Word is the safest token of the mind, so Christ was the exact revelation of God. He loved to dwell on the vital aspects of the Word.

Life is one of his slogans. He seemed to pick out the sentences that gleamed with this cardinal truth. Ponder this one:—"As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." That does not imply that God deliberately injected into the bosom of the Son, what was not formerly his own. It means that with the manifestation of His grace to mankind the life of deity came to its highest outward potency. Very differently has the skeptical world thought of the Nazarene. It has seen in Him a moral energy seething with human passion, that had been kindled into flame by contact with the unholy motives of His day. It has crowned Him with the halo of martyrdom and given Him a seat with the immortal champions of principle. It has surrounded Him with the charm of a seamless character, finding none like Him in moral goodness in all the catalogue of its saints. But it has not granted Him an inward impulse which wrought oblivious of the insinuations of sin and akin only to the essence of divinity. The two modes of explaining Jesus are before our eyes, today. John and the man of culture struggle for the possession of the modern mind, as lust and truth struggled for the soul of Faust. For myself, I do not see a single element in the environment of Jesus that could have produced His life. Nor do I see a single force in His nation's traditions nor in the complex sources of our racial life that could mark out this soul's destiny. He appeared as a "root out of a dry ground." If life be not there already, the sterile soil and ungracious climate had no power to create it.

We are impressed, next, with the fact that life is always complete. It is a rounded whole. The idea of completeness is never associated with a rock. The



chemical laws that weld masses of matter into one group are ever the same. The boulder and the beach pebble are subject to the same action in this respect. But we never speak of either as being a whole. We split off a piece of rock, and it is still a rock. The volcano belches forth its molten fire, which cools off into solidified forms, momentarily composite, but soon perhaps crumbling into bits. We might speak of the solar system as closed and hence complete. And yet the relation of our sun to a million other suns, no doubt, affects its action to a degree not appreciable to us. But we are perfectly sure, when we come to a living body, that it is complete in itself. It cannot be added to nor subtracted from. To be sure, you might amputate a member or destroy an organ without changing the vital force, or, you may reduce the vitality by accident or disease, bringing the body very near to the marge of death. But so long as the spark of life exists it is complete, and may return to its pristine strength. So long as life exists, it may re-form a shattered organ, as when the eye in certain mollusks is renewed out of the surrounding tissue. But when life becomes extinct no force can retain the organic structure in its integrity. It dissolves, disintegrates, and disappears as a separate body.

We are impressed with the spiritual sufficiency of Christ. He is complete. He was complete as an actor on the stage of human existence. Other men are distinguished by excess or defect or an unvarnished monotony. Jesus Christ evinced a balance which secures for Him the place of the perfect Man. Other men made their mark in thought, in action, in the emphasis on a particular kind of moral excellence. The Man of Nazareth was supreme in every depart-

ment. It is extremely difficult to unite the active and passive qualities of character. The man of action is wont to despise and deride the patient endurance of the saint or the cloistered student. The man of contemplation, on the other hand, looks with good-natured indulgence on his neighbor, who is busied about many things and seeks satisfaction only in practical results. In Jesus the two phases of life converged. He could act, and with the mighty sword-thrusts of an experienced combatant He exposed the hypocrisy of His Pharasaic opponents. He could endure, and no spot on earth is so luminous with human suffering as the green hill without the city's gate. In His own person, then, He exhibited the completeness of life.

He stood for the same comprehensive grasp in His teaching. Some moralists have uncovered the dreadful sores of men's debility, but have been powerless to present a cure. Others have insisted vehemently on the virtues of the remedy which they propose, though they did not know the disease. Jesus stood over against both curse and cure, and said: "Come unto me, and I will give you rest." He broke into the craven heart of the world, as no other thinker did or could. He unfolded the true mystery of sin. He caught the fancy and the instant faith of His age by discrediting the religious palliatives in use,—tithes, washings, prayers, and headachy fasts,—and by bringing their users face to face with the doom of unpardoned sin. And then, when words needed a lofty certificate of truth, He ascended the malefactor's cross and died for honor and salvation. This is the uncut circle of His teaching. Its girth and power He did not hesitate to interpret: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that who-

soever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life." When I think of the persistent reflections of earlier sages, which ended in fatuity; when I read the sober, critical estimates of life which were conceived by the nobler men of His own times, but which did not suggest to them the most elementary idea of conscience; when I see that really earnest thinkers accepted the dagger as the best way out of a world, whose terms they could not understand,—then I rejoice, that at last these mist-dimmed eyes of men see clearly the road of life, and that under the tuition of a gracious Guide we, more safely than Dante by Virgil's side, scale the heights of time and enter the portals of eternity, to rest in the bosom of our Lord. Such is the completeness of His truth.

There is, again, completeness in His influence. Test that statement by referring to the universal application of the Gospel. It is manifest that Judaism could include but a meager portion of the earth's population. Its note was exclusiveness. It is manifest, too, that the several ethnic religions give a glint of light here and there, but have in them no quality that could satisfy the general unrest of the soul. They do not show the real bitterness of sin; they do not exhibit the undying love of God; they cannot make us sure of a perpetuated existence beyond death; they provide us with no potent incentive to the performance of duty. Now Christianity introduces a new factor into the world. It does not approach men simply with a few historical facts or with a set of doctrines or with an emblazoned ritual, and expect to win allegiance on the basis of their acceptance. These glowing symbols it does present, but only as a support to a deeper promise. It affirms that Christ gives Life which is applicable to

every need. It seeks the intelligence of the scholar and invites him to submit his reason to the touchstone of grace. It seeks the sodden inertia of ignorance and holds out the beacon of hope. It will not rest, till the nations of the earth are awake to the realization of their holiest dreams. It believes that the world is one in need and aspiration, and proposes a vital purpose which will satisfy both. If it be objected that only a paltry section of mankind has as yet been won, and that not every conquest bears the expected fruit, still it is ours to answer that the providences of God, like the "thoughts of youth," are long and tireless; that preparation is often the most tedious element of action; and that in due time the desired consummation will arrive. The life of Christ is bound to be complete in the waiting hearts of men.

A third characteristic springs directly from what we have just said, namely, that life is subject to development. You are familiar with the two ways by which an object is enlarged; the one by addition, and the next by growth. Here is the crystal, whose molecules inevitably form in a six-sided figure. You may break it and grind its elements into powder; but so strong is its crystal-principle, that the smallest parts will at once re-form into the same kind of a figure. Here, again, is one of those dainty bells of the lilies-of-the-valley. You have watched its growth,—the seed, the stalk, the forming of the bud, the unfolding calyx, and at length the pure, unstained flower. It has not assumed its form before your eyes, as the crystal did. It has grown from an inward power. If you crush it in your hand, you know that the chemical devices of a thousand laboratories are helpless to make it over. The difference between life and inert matter lies here.

The one is susceptible of growth, its highest development being somehow secreted in the germ; the other is now, what it ever has been and will ever be.

I am touching on a cardinal truth in spiritual life, a fact which has been remarked on from the beginning of Christian thought. The fullness of the divine power did not break on the world in amazing grandeur at the start. It grew apace. Our Lord acted on this crucial principle in His treatment of the disciples. He knew very well that they could not grip at once the deep, heart-searching doctrines of the new Evangel. "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." The slow, graduated declaration of His religious precepts may strike us as an unnecessary precaution, when we remember how the distinguished teachers of earth hurled the most ponderous themes at their pupils' heads. But Jesus was right. There is growth in thought as in physique. The truth of redemption as Paul learned it would have been an idle dream to the fishermen of Galilee, so long as they were in the swathing-bands of personal contact with Christ. It is by a similar development that the divine Life has got into the church. The study of her intellectual story is full of interest. She did not grasp all at once the doctrine of the sacred Trinity; she did not see at first the meaning of a depraved and helpless state by sin; she had to wait for the majestic theme of justification, till Luther recovered Paul's view of it from the corruptions of a medieval formalism. It is only in modern times that missionary zeal, with the world as the rim of conquest, has truly interpreted the last command of Jesus. A humdrum program would be presented to the church, if there were no other intellectual worlds to conquer; if our doctrine had hardened



into insoluble dogma at the very start, and we never could get a little bigger view of Christ. The curse of Christian theology is an ever renewed attempt to stereotype it. If this creed is the last word to be said on truth, then we may as well withdraw our faith in it; it is doomed to die. Life requires expansion for religion, as well as nature. Shut up the church to an ancient formulary, and you will cramp her spiritual energies, exhaust her ambition, and render her as hopeless as the Oriental bodies, which have "a name to live but are dead."

## II

We take up the second part of our subject, that spiritual life is not original with men. It seems to us a truism, and we wonder who could possibly deny it. But the pride or the self-consciousness of men has denied it, and is doing so today. We are as men enamored of our achievements. We have produced about everything in sight, and fall back on the conviction that we must have furbished up our religious natures, too. It will not be denied that the genius of great minds is one of the remarkable factors in human progress. No one can study the discoveries and inventions in every sphere of activity and thought without being infected with admiration for the ability displayed. No one can follow the course of political struggle by which the race has been lifted from impotence to the civilized standards we now acknowledge, and not be profoundly impressed by the stern assertion of human will. We have done marvelous things. But the very instruments men have used for achieving great results are given, not made. The beaver has his tools fastened to his body; they belong to the organism.



Man makes the tools for economic service; but the crowning intelligence which creates these tools is in its turn not made, but a part of his heritage. Life is born of life, or not at all.

The first application of the principle in spiritual things is, that man by nature has not a single power which resembles the divine life, we have described. He cannot therefore make his soul into the likeness of truth. For what could for a moment be regarded as on a level with the life which is conveyed by Christ? I examine the common emotions of the race. They are full of natural beauty, oft-times. Here is the sentiment of maternal affection, a mother's love for her babe, a protecting force, that shelters it from every ill, and prompts the parent to accept death rather than allow a hair of its head to fall. The affection is noble. After we have viewed the baseness of life to which some parents descend it passes our comprehension how so glorious a sentiment as this can persist. Here is the love of truth, the willingness of a soul to pass through the fires in support of it. When Roger Bacon spent years in prison, because he taught scientific doctrines abhorrent to the interests of the church, we see a noble soul, undismayed by torture, alive to the thoughts of God. These are matchless qualities, and we rejoice that the frail frame of man may support them. But we ask, Do they reach up to the zenith of life, the exalted standard set by our Lord? Henry Drummond has drawn out an interesting parallel. He likens the moral beauty of the non-Christian to the severe and glistening facets of the crystal; and the beauty of spirit in the Christian to the smooth charm of the shell on the beach. Both invite the attention of observers, and both win our esteem. But can we assess the value of

each by studying simply the surface? There is a fundamental difference, which a superficial examination does not reveal. The two objects do not belong to the same kingdom. The one is composed of dead, unorganized matter, the other is instinct with life.

The Edinburgh professor has put his finger on an important distinction. He has seized the two great forms of personal excellence and divided sharply between them. Morality can be made a pungent force and a luminous shape in the councils of earth. It can crystallize the rules of a high code of honor. It can take an Aristides and embellish his career with the lines of stern rectitude and impartial justice. It is steadfast, valiant, unyielding. But Christian character is vibrant with a divine discontent; it seeks a holier model and a finer fiber. It craves not regularity of sentiment, but a vision of God. To erect a state in which uniform conduct were possible was the ideal of Hellas. To erect an invisible kingdom, in which souls entered the presence of God, was and is the aim of Jesus Christ. In other words, spiritual beauty is determined by our attitude towards God. Hebrew thinkers divided the world into the two groups, only two,—“nations which knew God,” and “nations which knew not God.” There is no neutral ground. The former may disclose certain elements of formal beauty that enchant the casual inquirer. The latter, at times, are so barren of ethical ideals as to stun the believer and draw the ridicule of foes. [But however that may be, the difference is decisive; it consists in the fact that God has visited and charged the hearts of men, put His life into theirs, and made them sensible of His power as other men can never be. The difference grows chasm-deep, as we realize that moral beauty has little ability to transmit

itself. How many men of Socrates' fellowship were lured to emulation by his noble death? But myriads, athrill with the divine life that Jesus gives, have laid down reputation, goods, family, and life for the Gospel!

Yet if nature cannot create spiritual power, she nevertheless can become the channel for its currents' flow. Let us take a leaf out of her own book, a page of unusual beauty. Life cannot issue from inert matter, but life can take up such matter into her organisms and derive her strength from its elements. Do you ask how the lifeless soil becomes a beautiful flower? Watch that dull, dark clod of earth, unattractive and unfit for use. Into it a seed is dropped and reposes unseen there. Soon, warmed by the earth and fed by the moisture it opens its integument, sends out its sprout, lifts its stem to the light, takes in the chemical elements of the atmosphere, grows, thrives, comes to maturity, begins to hope for perpetuity, unfolds in the white bloom of the lily, drops its seeds, which are to repeat its service,—in short, transmutes the power of inert matter into the beauty of its flower. Thus can life employ the lifeless substance about it.

The analogy is close. Into the crevices of the heart the subtle life of heaven is dropped. It comes, we know not how, and often, we know not when; but come it does, in gushing, transforming power. It takes the crabbed disposition and makes it into a golden song. It takes an empty purpose and fills it with a rich congeries of holy ambitions. It seizes a strong nature, going to waste, and girds it with a powerful ideal. Once it was Saul, exercised over the trivial matters of the law; now it is Paul, energized with a cosmic sympathy. Once he was a Jew, exclusive, reactionary, and

bitter; now he is the flaming Apostle, winging his way to the hopeless men of earth with a message of eternal life. Matthew Arnold thought of religion as "morality, touched with emotion." He got his terms dislocated. Religion is the heart's emotion, evincing itself in a consecrated morality. Religion grips morality. Life takes up the unorganized masses of earth into its crucible and absorbs them. In the order of the created world, that which is natural is first, and "afterwards that which is spiritual." But in the realm of grace spirit is seated on the throne, and to it the natural powers of men must inevitably bow. Christ is the reservoir from which peace and safety are drawn. Without Him, you may lead a life of natural, that is to say, moral excellence; but you will miss the deep, serene, unchangeable communion with the Spirit of goodness, mercy, and truth.

We come to the close of this study with a remark on the assurance, conveyed by the text. Men crave for life, as for nothing else on earth. This is what makes the problem so fascinating, and the same time so complex. We get no guaranty like this in the vitalities of the world. If a physician should arise possessing the faculty of communicating life by his touch, his practice would soon exhaust his personal strength. If an experimenter should appear to answer all the queries that now trouble the learned world, how soon would resolutions of praise and delight be engrossed on the books of every scientific society! If a moralist should arrive, who could tell you how to act in every possible contingency, I take it, we should soon create an Utopian state. If some day a preacher should ascend the pulpit stairs with a divine charm of speech and manner, and be able to persuade the church to follow rigorously

the rules laid down by Jesus, the probability is that both ministry and church would speedily become superfluous; the millennium would be here.

But these suppositions are idle. We do not expect a personal effusion like this. Yet the very thing of which we have spoken is already within the grasp of men. The life of heaven is now on this earth. It became a distinct fact on the day of Pentecost. It is supported by the known laws of psychic exchange; that is, the soul of man is susceptible to the secret influence, which we call the work of the divine Spirit. It has been affirmed a thousand times in the movements of the church. It is found in many an obscure heart, which the world counts insignificant, but which is in reality the focal point of eternal power. We may live—we shall live, because the divine Son lives in us. This is the confidence not to be disturbed. You may not be able to define such life in logical terms; you may not be able to reveal its true meaning to men; but this you can do:—when the shadows begin to gather before your eyes and the energies of body ebb away, then you may sink your anchor deep into the unfathomable heart of your Lord and wait for the revelation of the endless Life, which you are to share with Him in heaven.

## XII

### LOVE IN THE CRUCIBLE

*John 14:21. "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me."*

WHAT is love? The query is borne hither on the wings of distant fancy. The maid of Athens flushed with the joy of the first avowal finds a sufficient answer in her own breast. The youth of the new world standing abashed before the object of his interest spurns analysis by the rules of logic, and reads his definition in the gleam of the eye, the clasp of the hand, or the low-uttered word of assent. Love as a sentiment binds a credulous antiquity heart and soul to the scientific formulas of the latest experience. Love will not change. The ideas of organized society melt into a thousand unsuspected moulds. The creeds of religion and her elaborate rituals have been chiseled by time into finished forms such as fascinate the mind and seal the faith of multitudes. Love moves on unchallenged. Her pristine values are re-interpreted in terms of enlarging knowledge but as the sanctuary of man and God she defies all change. The dirge of Hector's consort celebrating her deathless devotion is echoed in ten thousand shadowed homes today. The solitary hymn of the desert saint as he lifts his fainting soul into communion with the Unseen typifies the melodic intonation of all humble worshippers who for a few short hours retreat to the



shrines of religion, away from the crush of busy marts, the clash of brilliant intellects and even from the thunder of murderous Krupp and Creusot.

What is love, this imaging impulse, this human fact that Jesus makes central to His scheme of life? To lay hold upon the commandments of grace and keep them as the sole dynamic of conduct—this is the program of love.

# I

Love is a property of nature. It is bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. If men had to wait for sects or sages to unfold its terms, very few of us would learn even the primary syllables of human affection. Instruction, however, is simple. To live is to love. The avenues of biologic progress teem with its spontaneous characters. Yonder radiant thrush soaring aloft in glad song, careless of wind or rain, proclaims at once his mission and his goal. He seeks in passionate abandon his appointed mate. It is the witness of nature to her divine law. The suspicious lioness in the jungle secretes her young in the silent dark away from the devouring jaws of the enemy, obeying the instinct of love, which, tenacious amid enveloping perils, instructs the unreflective brute to shield her own against impending death. The pathway up the steep heights of animal evolution is strewn with tokens that seem at times to interpret the sentiments of a cultured race.

What then is love? It is first of all a native law. The man of facts can never expunge it from his life-book. If he did, he would have to erase every significant page, and reduce his history to a myth. Try, for example, to write off the myriad incidents that chronicle the embrace of mother-love. To go no further

afield than the personal implications of this verse: how shall we explain the primary currents of Jesus' life, if we cannot define the undertones of affection sounding in His and Mary's heart? The Evangelists have been blamed for offering so scant a memoir of the Nazareth home. Censorious readers have chided Jesus for an apparent neglect of kinsmen in His public ministrations. The truth lies in neither complaint. Barring the mystery of the sacred Birth, we are confronted with a number of simple human passages. The remonstrating mother at the first Passover, "Son, why hast thou dealt thus with us?", the anxious group on the edge of the throng, sending a message of caution to the tireless Teacher, the crushed and weeping woman beneath Calvary's shadow, whom John is to receive from her Son's hands as a perpetual charge,—can one inspect these if only for a moment without being moved by the insatiate passion of face and voice, nature's cry for her own?

What is love? This is love, to give place to the drive of nature, to have and to hold whatever wisdom has provided for the culture of mind and body. From this point of view I read the exquisite lyric of David and Jonathan. Two men meet in the prime of powers, their hearts not yet wasted by the sheer despair of evaporated effort, their memories not yet so crowded with achievements as to find no place for friendly support. The quiet reserve of the one, the impulsive dash of the other, constitute the two poles of a magnetic field. Neither attracts its like; they must be reciprocal, they must supplement. Love is fundamentally the response of want. It is the reaction to what can serve the individual's vital interests.

In a feeling not dissimilar to this, I discover the

gropings of men towards a spiritual hope. It is folly to contend that the impulse of religion fell upon the race as an afterthought. He who argues this is only repeating the Protagorean myth as to the origin of political virtue. Can the mirage of ghosts and the visioned reappearance of departed ancestors force us at length to react to the idea of superhuman control? Do we affirm that religion has sprung from the misjudgment of a stampeded fancy? that men bow and worship, because they are wrought upon by an exaggerated fear? that if dreams or sudden fright had not exposed the incredible weakness of our position, we should still be swathed in the pristine innocence of heart, afar from blazing altar or threaded rosary? That terror is real both to confiding child and awakened man, I should be the last to deny. Nor is the cry for relief less real. They go together. But fear does not create a religious impulse; it simply furnishes a channel through which that impulse moves to its normal expression. Hence religion is human need writ large. It is another name for the primitive feeling which in the more public phases of life we have called love. It belongs to the frame of the soul; it is not the by-product of social change. If God be not somewhere within the field of spiritual reaction, the higher instincts of life atrophy and die; hope becomes the shadow of a dream, and the world the ghastly shimmer of death.

But the warm response which has animated every inferior relation cannot be denied its part in the high program of a soul's canonization. Love here, as elsewhere, is organic. It leaps in the blood; it fills the meshes of the mind; it prints its language on the brow, and thrills in every gesture of the body. Religious love

is varied; it may evince itself in the studied calm of the Buddha or in the fivefold prostrations of the Moslem. But whatever its forms it cannot remain unuttered. To man, to principle, to God, the insinuations of love are coercive. We are compelled to love something. The will of man courts sure and swift defeat, if it strives to block the instinct's march to its goal. Therefore, it is not the business of religion to determine whether love exists. Psychology has already done that. The business of religion is supplementary; it must determine with authority upon what object love shall rest. The choice of one's religious faith is as much a matter of personal discrimination as a man's selection of a wife. Pay your respects to the maxim that "true marriages are made in heaven." They are; but how? In the sense that the agent is gifted with the primordial right to choose for himself. The impulse which goads a man to leave his parents and establish a home for himself is inbred in the race. Its particular direction is subject always to the behest of the parties involved.

Love is thus not merely organic. It is critically directed. It must be, in order to measure up to the feeling exacted by Jesus of His followers. The word He uses in the text makes that point clear. Peter and John resort to Him under the instigation of a maturer motive than obedience to impulse. The emotional inquirer, to be sure, was not absent from His clientele. In the heat of a momentary resolution, one hearer exclaims, "Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest." But Jesus answers, the home and hearthstone, the place of warmth and cheery talk are none of His. If anyone sought Him to satisfy the common emotions of life, his quest was vain. Personal enthusiasm be-

gotten by love is a valued asset in the counsels of the world. The holy Master, as human as another, did not despise it. Many a time, as amid the shadows of Gethsemane, He yearned for the embrace of sympathetic comrades. But love which envisages faith is after all a fact of reason. Paul came to Christ having made, I suppose, the severest examination of religious concepts ever attempted by human mind. The creed of the Rabbins was not an unorganized mass of opinions, as is commonly believed; it was an articulate scheme of thought, entirely congenial to the trained intellect of Paul and Philo. Through this the young student passed unsatisfied. He sought an end beyond it. To reach the end, he had to exercise the instruments of intellectual choice. No blind untutored thrust could win it. Why did Paul come to Jesus? Why did this man of cold logic with the pessimism of Greek culture on his lips rise to the empyrean glow of love, as soon as he touched the person of Christ?

To answer for Paul is to answer for the men of power today. Paul did not come to Jesus by the lure of another's witness. I do not undervalue the effect of trenchant testimony. Its radiant beauty and oft-times its tragic consequences are emphatic in the panorama of human life. Multitudes of believers owe their first step in the Christian faith to the ingratiating word of a neighbor. History does not tell but the imagination loves to conjecture how many units in the young Pharisee's creed were written by the unflinching death of Stephen. Nevertheless, it was not the blood of the first Martyr that awoke the sleeping conscience. Nor did Paul resort to Christ, because he was electrified by the enmiracled life of the Lord. He does not endeavor to define a miracle; he fails to state what



part it should play in the scheme of Christian evidence. The "mighty works" of Galilee and Judea are unremembered in his writings. Alone of all the mystifying scenes in an unique career the empty tomb commanded his wondering inquest. Because from the precincts of death the basic principle of life was drawn, his pages shine with the luminous syllables of conviction. That Jesus healed the sick and discharged the mind of its "rooted sorrows," he knew as well as the most authentic eyewitness. Deeds like these are the marks of His divinity and essential to the appreciation of His worth; but they could not coax the embittered soul from its love of sin. Men do not perform an act of faith under the spell of a laboratory experiment.

But perhaps Paul came to Jesus as a *dernier ressort*. With the utmost candor he had weighed the two prevailing schemes of thought and found them wanting. The religious impulse must react to some person or thing. Therefore he chose the latest claimant. By such a method of elimination Peter may have found his Master. "To whom shall we go?" he cried. "Gamaliel and Hillel present systems of doctrine cogent in language, attested by a wealth of tradition, interpreted by the ablest scholars of the day. Yet they yield no meaning to the hungry heart. They have words, withered words, words of deadly uniformity. Thou only hast the words of eternal life." Every decision for Christ is the residual deposit of an eliminating process. We believe, not because we have found other orders of thought defective, but because we have found His true. If any man bestows his affection on Christ in sheer desperation after earlier objects of trust have failed and with no just understanding of His cardinal merits, I predict for his passion a short shrift and a



speedy decay. This Lord is like the monarch of earth—He wants the steady, chastened love of mature reflection, or none at all. For reasons such as these, Paul did not cast his spiritual anchorage by the cross of Calvary as though it were the last unswept mooring. He approached it in the swell of a man's conviction. He conceived for Christ that loyal love, which a man is careful to repose in the object of his dearest interest. He embraced the cause of a despised religion because reason made the stupefying discovery that spiritual safety is the gift of God and not the product of ceremonial diligence.

What is love? I return to our first question but garnish it with a new implication. What is love to Christ? The impulse now becomes a program. It is no longer spent upon the common habitudes of sense; it has crept into the secrecies of spirit. Love is instant answer to the call of Supernature. Its quintessence is distilled before the gaze of an astonished world in the act of holy sacrifice. Early Greek philosophy found the spheres wrapped in the harmonies of concurrent action. Modern poets have read in the Newtonian formula the same cosmic affection. Fancy has construed the terms of matter by the sublime imagery of the mind. There are invaluable hints to be gained from the words of science. Centripetal force is real, the coherence of chemical elements is real; but the love of Christ is real in another sense. The love of His touch has passed from the moods of theoretic speculation into the judgments and convictions of strong men. The blood of heroes plunges through its veins.

Anatole France has misconceived the essence of Christian sentiment. The monk of "Thais" cannot endure the moral stagnations of solitude. Love is

empty, the stream of personal friendship shallow. Shall nature's instincts go unappeased, if religion fail to satisfy? He turns for answer to the brilliant artiste whom his zeal has erstwhile converted. Human passion meets its fulfillment in the appeal to sense and in no other way. This is the judgment of the French author. Is the analysis true? Is uncriticized impulse the sole arbiter of men's fortunes? Christianity does not fling aside the familiar values of life. Paternal care, filial regard, the love of man to woman, the response of the eye to beauty and of the ear to melody, are never appraised as inconsistent with loyalty to truth. But love, says the Christian ethic, shapes its course by judgment; otherwise it is little better than the impulse of the brute. Therefore it proposes a supreme direction. It unveils an infinitely glorious Face. Thais and Christ are the poles of love. If you love the one the other is perforce disesteemed. But if you love the holy Master, your passion for other objects is not annulled, but strangely changed. The world you enter is ablaze with splendors hitherto unsuspected. All the ancient relationships are charged as by a magic energy. You are a better father, a more considerate husband, a wiser citizen, because you have caught some glint of the grace of Christ. Love like this is alien from the conceit of the French skeptic. He has not even amid his dreams spun the first tenuous strand in the fabric of Christian character. The confessions of Saint John are to him a mystic transport. Jesus is a noble but mistaken teacher. There is no goal but flesh.

## II

Against this verdict we set up the deliverance of the text, "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." The test of natural love is intensity. The test of reflective love is fidelity. The difference between them is fundamental. How shall I measure the force of an emotion? I may examine the driving instinct itself. No man, for example, is willing to live alone. He grows uneasy, restless, and morbid. Loneliness affirms that a certain impulse has been thwarted. A man is not a whole man until he has had converse with his neighbor. But which neighbor? For the meaning of instinct can often be interpreted best by the type of stimulus to which it responds. Yet even here the test is not complete. What is the quality of the pleasure I feel in the presence of chosen friends? That quality alone can yield the sure and ultimate ground of judgment. That is to say, the test is personal. It comes back ever and anon to my private enjoyment.

Do we test the love of the spirit in such a crucible? The symptoms of ordinary affection, we say, are subject to scientific examination. We may take our feelings to the laboratory and have them assessed. Can we do the same for our religious hopes? I answer: No. But why not? If love to God and love to man be on the same footing, as some thinkers hold, why should we not judge them by the same method? The retort is, that an idea has entered, which is represented by no particular impression of the body. That idea is a purpose. It is not a passing act; it is the principle that explains my conduct as a whole. Love has gotten beyond the need of momentary gratification. It seeks

the expanse of life; it knows now that come what may it must and shall be faithful to a supreme truth. Its tests appear, not as a matter of private exaltation, as the mystics claim, but as a steady indomitable effort of will. The alembic into which it is cast is the fact of experience. The chemicals that try its value are the commands of Christ. Hence, Peter is not beside the mark when he exclaims, "The trying of your faith, being of much greater worth than that of gold, even when it is tried by fire, issues in praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."

You can test the virtue of your love by seeing how it behaves in solution. The solution proposed, I said, is the evangelic commandment. The first effect of this treatment is to make bare the individual responsibility of the agent. To carry out the mission of love one is not expected to obey indiscriminately a series of precepts. Christ does not, like the Rabbins, issue a catalogue of rules. He exhales the spirit of law. He does not exact from His subjects a blind surrender of will; He demands that they think for themselves in every spiritual emergency. His government is not a moral mechanism. He does not conceive of His disciples as so fixed in His body, the church, that they automatically obey the direction of the head. The difference between His rule and the arbitrary rule of Rabbinism is the same as that between the Anglo-Saxon and Teutonic ideas of the State. For us in America the State does not absorb its citizens. They constitute and direct the State. German thinkers like Hegel have engulfed the individual in the currents of government, meaning the government classes. The mind of each is the mind of all; there is no moral sense save that which interprets the State's integrity.

Jesus, on the other hand, recognizes my right, as a man, to study and apply the principle He has formulated. When He commands us to meet an affront on one cheek by turning the other, He is as far as possible from asking a literal, unqualified compliance. Resistance to wrong no less than repression of self is an effective motive in Christian conduct. The point is that I, a believer in the lordship of Christ, am forced to exercise my private wisdom in determining what answer is best in any given circumstances.

In face of such an appeal to judgment, it is necessary to re-examine our spiritual attitudes. The test I take it is twofold. It concerns, first, the understanding of truth, and secondly, the shaping of conduct. The easiest way to deal with the words of Jesus is to organize them into a system. We act by this method in the field of philosophy; we venture to treat thus the cinemetograms of science. The method is simple. Lay out the program of logical sequences as you make a survey for a railway; then bring in the ballast, the supports, the steel bessemers, that is to say, the controlling principles, the wise sayings, the vital sentences, wrenched if need be from their context; fit them into the designated plan, and you have a creed which neither argument nor innuendo can destroy. You are safe in the embrace of reason. Men have done this very thing with the phrases of our Lord. They have wrought the precious ore of truth into coins stamped with their own superscription. This is the divine mintage, we are assured. Take it, cash it in the currency of conduct, and you are forever exempt from spiritual bankruptcy. The method I submit is alluring. It appeals to the egoism of the mind. If I can fix revelation in the moulds of human science, what a triumph



for my skill as a dialectician! Surely, I shall honor the message of my Master, and incidentally bring it within the understanding of my less discerning neighbor.

Tread slowly, my friend. There are serious questions that you will have to meet in your attempt to frame a system. Has it ever occurred to you that you might leave out the living, breathing Christ Himself? In the early creeds of the church the acute intellect sought to uncover the anatomy of His person. It thought by a species of dissection to explain surgeon-like the uses of nerve and tissue, and the organic compactness of the whole. But tell me, can one probe to the heart while life is still in the body? The achievements of modern surgery upon the living body have touched the lay imagination by their daring and success, but, as everyone knows, one thrust of the blade beneath the surface of the cerebrum brings instant death. Does Jesus live, I ask, in the creed of Nicea, as He does in the Gospel of John? Can you feel the pulse of mastering love in the sentences that struggle to invest this Christ with the attributes of Deity? Believe me, I do not plead for the destruction of the ancient confessions; I ask only for their re-interpretation under the spell of a personal Presence. Love does not shine in the formulas of logic. Love thrills through the heart that has touched the Hand of Love. We know Christ not in the theology of the schools, but in the almost sentient glow of the closet and the altar.

The test of love is of two kinds. One I have described; the other is more familiar, but for that reason perhaps more difficult to understand. The devotion of the Christian is tried in the crucible of duty. Let us at once particularize. "If ye have love one to another,



ye shall prove the genuineness of your love to me." Despite what we said as to the naturalness of the benevolent impulse, the practice of love is the hardest task in human life. The child of the home knows it; the citizen in the state is aware of it; the nation as a bounded group knows it all too keenly. When interests conflict love flies out and hatred enters. Resentment claims its trophies and calls them nature's rightful awards. Instead of the Christmas chant the Hymn of Hate is heard in the street. Its strains are the music of marching soldiers; its theme is the speech of governments; its cry becomes the impassioned voice of patriotism. Men go down to death with its withering chords upon their lips. Hate that absorbs the enthusiasm of conflicting millions cannot be without moral power.

But what can hate do? Can it bind up the wounds of body or reorganize the distracted emotions of the mind? What can hate do? Can it disentangle the web of mistrust and suspicion, which ignorance has woven about the intercourse of states? What can hate do? Can it recover the balance of judgment, the supremacy of reason, which is the just heritage of men made in the image of God? Can hate do this? Has it ever done this? The answer is made in the record of its opposite. Observe what love has done and will do. The letter is from a soldier of a country which has adopted the Hymn of Hate as its national anthem:

"Dear Sir,—I have promised your son to write this to you. By the good guidance of God I found your son in a shell hole wounded. He had lain there two days. As the Lord Jésus Christ bids us love our enemies, I ministered to him, bound up his wounds, and gave him wine and bread. In a short time he revived, and I, with some of my men, carried him to a place of safety. He is now in hospital, being well cared for."

To love one's enemies is soon to change that enemy into a friend. Love may stand out against hate to the end of the road, but hate will surely melt away beneath love's fervent rays. The proof positive of allegiance to Christ will be found in the number of men and women, whose antagonisms we have deliberately sought to annul. To immerse oneself in the problems and dangers of a missionary career is a true index of a true consecration. Yet there is something impersonal about it. We stand in the offing, so to speak; we ride the waves as lightships, guiding misgoverned souls away from shallows and rocks; we touch but are not touched; we move like charmed figures through the mass of sorrow, sin, and dread, like Una in the "Faerie Queene."

"As bright as death the morning stars appear,  
Out of the East with flaming locks bedight,  
To tell that dawning day is drawing near,  
And to the world does bring long-wished light;  
So fair and fresh that Lady shewed herself in sight."

Far be it from me to belittle the enthusiasm that calls devoted spirits away from home and country to unknown peoples and their haunts unknown. I honor them and many of them I love with a friendship born of uncounted years of intimacy. But the most galling test of Christian love is not to be found in service at the front. In the fine zeal and splendid rapport that carries even craven souls out of their congenital weakness, it is not hard to express one's love to Christ. But in the long, long hours of unheroic work, when your comrade bides his time to thrust the dagger into your heart, what, we demand, shall be the quality of love which arrests the angry word by your teeth's

edge, and holds the strained arm tight by your side? That, I take it, is "keeping his commandments." That is heroism, that is will. Show me the man who is steadily rotting his flesh away among his leper colonists and I will show you a man urged and moulded by the pure essence of Christian loyalty. But show me again the man who turns a deaf ear to reprisal and willingly endures insult rather than wound another, and I will write the record of a life so holy and true, that it shall have a right to stand emblazoned by the side of that Life whose most sublime intent was framed in the prayer, "Father forgive them; for they know not what they do." Love that is not easily provoked has kept the commandment.

### XIII

#### THE PROBLEM OF THE INCARNATION

*John 14:20. "At that day ye shall know  
that I am in the Father."*

"**A**T that day"—at what day? When did the pupils of Jesus become perfectly aware of His unmixed and perpetual divinity? Obviously they did not detect its terms in the fateful hour that sealed this last intercourse with Him. The future tense assures us that their trembling minds had up to that moment utterly failed to comprehend His character. If Peter buoyed on the wave of sudden intuition exclaimed, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God," he was repeating the formula of an ancient creed, not the conviction of a reasoned faith. Jesus was to them a problem, as He has been to the world of men ever since. They were to know His inner heart some day, but when, the Master did not clearly foretell. He was content to let them study the phases of the problem.

It is no blur to the superlative dignity of Christ that He should appear to men in the guise of a problem to be worked out. The student is continually confronted with the hints of undiscovered facts. Thus, you cannot look into your neighbor's eye without learning that he is to you not a well of translucent water, but a dark glass through which you sometimes peer, in vain to catch the first familiar element. You face

here the fundamental query, whether he be of mental structure like your own. Has he the same personal aptitudes, the same likes and dislikes, the same hopes and fears as you? The quest of the eager lover for a response to his love is as nothing in complexity compared to your inquiry into the mind which by analogy you deem to inhabit the moving figure by your side. The fact of the reality of another mind you do not doubt; but how to reach valid grounds for examination is to you the persistent problem.

Yet with all its bewildering entanglements, the problem of personality does not daunt the inquirer. Nor does the Christian student remain long quiescent before the more fascinating problem of his Lord's nature. If Jesus be "in the Father," a fact unequivocally affirmed by Holy Writ, how shall we approach the problem so as at length to reach a complete understanding of its cardinal facts? The problem, it seems to me, is threefold: it is a problem of record, of science and of private experience.

## I

The religion of Christ is staged among the vital movements of the human race. Its origins are not lost in the crabbed fogs of a nation's antiquity. Who can scientifically trace the growth of the Hercules-myth in Greece? That the Orphic rite which made Hercules its patron saint exercised a powerful, not to say beneficent influence upon Greek thought, no one will deny, but that the favorite hero-god ever had a history in the same sense that Alexander or Plato had, only the most ingenuous would claim. The life of Jesus, on the other hand, had its genesis and growth amid a people

noted for their practical habits. The poetic symbolism of Homer and Hesiod was absent. Whatever miraculous element entered the fabric of their history was of the practical sort; it served definite providential ends. In the amazing transactions of the Gospels the purposive aspect is never obscured. The miracle, to use a common epigram, becomes an acted parable. Truths that the reason fails to grasp grow warm and palpitant when the senses of the body respond to concrete stimulus.

More than that, the life of Jesus is enshrined in a definite record. Being historic, as the exploits of Alexander are historic, it is subject to delineation on a written page. The poet roams the uncharted circuits of fancy in order to fashion his hero. The historian pursues the strictly defined avenues of fact as laid out in certified events. If Jesus be a character conceived by John and Paul and the mind of the infant church, then the words we read in the New Testament are the words of a poet and not an historian, and are to be critically examined as such. But if the Figure of Jesus be historic and the events of His life clearly known, then we have as much right to find faithful histories in these books as in the Commentaries of Julius Cæsar. Esteeming the Gospels as a record not a poem, we are constrained to meet certain objections which criticism from time immemorial has alleged. These objections in many cases would have died on the lips if the events of the Life here portrayed had been as commonplace as those of the famous Roman campaigner. But since Jesus is said to have incarnated God men are asking by what right four books can formulate and record such a judgment.

The objector thrusts his blade first into the unique-



ness of the record. Here, he says, are the most remarkable facts ever developed in the long eras of human activity. The Deity, whom the rapt seer of Israel could discern only in the secrecy of spiritual communion, is now revealed for common eyes to behold. Here again, he says, are facts that bear the most momentous consequences to the entire race. Moral progress, civil welfare, the religious attainments of generations unborn hang upon His life. Confucius and Moses may die and pass away. Civilizations energized by their words vanish and leave scarce a vestige behind. But Jesus' words and Jesus' works carry safety, hope, health for a blighted world. Why, he asks, is the memorial of such a life confined to a single group of documents? Why—to take a logical example—should not Josephus have seized upon this crucial fact and emblazoned it on his history of the Jews? About it his pen is dumb. Pious scribes jealous for the honor of the story have written in a few lines but they manifestly are stray orphans in the text. Must we not at least hold our judgment in abeyance hoping that some day we shall discover the corroborating evidence?

I answer for Josephus, the critic of his day, and he will stand as type of other writers of the same or later periods. Why did he have nothing to say about the strange happenings in which some hoped to find the turning-point of Jewish history? The most direct reply is that Josephus was the mouthpiece of the political and not the religious feelings of Judah. Though learned in the traditions and expectations of his people he was caught in the glare of Roman imperialism. He sought to be a purveyor of the new world-ideas to an enslaved race. With an insight

worthy of his nation's best thought he saw the unfolding of Rome's political genius. The time for petty kingdoms was gone, the era of cosmopolitan dominion was at hand. In the mind of Rome law and government were supreme. Religion played an insignificant part. It would be futile then to lift the religious claims of Judea in rivalry with the sweep of conquering eagles or the solidifying effects of civil statutes. To him to whom history was a record of wars and dynasties, the subjugation of peoples and the intrigues of courts, the controversies of religious sects seemed as carrion to devouring beasts. In other words, Josephus was not interested in the development of the religious life of the Hebrews, and since Jesus declined to seek a place in the political sun, and since a point of contact between Christianity and Rome was at first absent, he could say nothing as to the new creed.

Take another fact. The new faith had been espoused by a small and unimportant group of citizens. Its beginnings were shrouded in the mists of obscurity. Some spiritual movements have captured at once the citadel of aristocracy and without intending it laid their fingers upon the pulse of civil authority. They start by revolution. The essence of Christianity is other. It develops by evolutionary stages. Its power at first is germinal. You plant the seed, a tiny microscopic thing of life; you lay it in the ground and wait for time and sunshine to elicit its hidden strength. Thus Jesus conceived His truth, a mustard seed so small as to be inconspicuous; so inconspicuous as to incur the neglect of observers. The rulers did not believe on Him, save two; one came to Him under cover of darkness, the other after death to claim His body. Feeble beginnings like these did not threaten the com-

placence of the Jewish church. What reason, therefore, might a great historian conjure up for thinking that they would affect the political relations of Rome and Jerusalem?

It is perfectly apparent that the life of Jesus could not legitimately be found portrayed on the pages of the secular historian. Does this omission argue that the life was never lived? If so, many an obscure event which has proven of incomparable value to society would be excluded from the history of the race, and truth would be turned into falsehood.

Having his blow parried by an appeal to fact, the objector enters the second thrust. The record, he says, was written by men who were interested in the premises, and it must be carefully scanned for biased statements. The point is worthy of consideration. Many brilliant works have been written, in which not so much questions of fact as author's opinions are at issue. The treatment is *ex parte* and hence unreliable. No critical reader can pass through the chapters of Macaulay's History of England without feeling that he has faced not so much the chronicles of the English Revolution as the Liberalism of the early nineteenth century read back into the events of the seventeenth. To be a good historian, you must certainly cancel the personal equation as remorselessly as possible. Nevertheless this does not mean that you must be out of sympathy with your subject. To understand an historic character you must somehow constrain yourself to think his thoughts and travel his paths with faithful exactitude. Whom, for example, should we choose to write the life of our Martyr President? Could Stephen Douglas qualify for the task? His was a brilliant synthetic mind. He knew the political situation of

the times and its antecedents as few others did. He came to grips with Lincoln in the memorable debates of the Senatorial campaign and his attack was worthy of his foeman's steel. They stood upon opposite sides on the solemn issues of the day, and though he fought Lincoln at every turn and defeated him once he never failed to evince supreme respect for his opponent's courage, intellect, power, and zeal. Shall Douglas write the life of Lincoln? Or shall we commit the task to another, trained in his youth by the President's side, getting an acquaintance with the heart of Lincoln as perhaps none other could, in later manhood serving his country with distinguished success in diplomatic and ministerial capacities, a man of mind and heart, a poet, a seer, a judge of human motives, a student for many years of the life of his hero after its close—shall we not rather, I say, commit the fashioning of this classic story to John Hay, the friend and scribe of Lincoln?

The point is clear; it is no disqualification to the authors of the Gospels that they had knowledge of Jesus. But in order to clinch the right of John and Matthew, Peter through Mark and Paul through Luke, to write of Him, I submit the following memorandum.

These men were gifted with an historic temper. How do I know it? Let us ask which of all mental qualities we must demand of the successful historian. Two spring at once to view. We demand that he have what we may call an historical perspective. If the student is at loss to fit a particular event into the scheme of things we call him a blunderer in his field. History is not a series of moves on the checkerboard, history is a growth. The divine events which startle

our gaze in the Evangelical record are as genuinely subject to this principle as the remarkable achievements of Augustus Cæsar. The Evangelists realized it and were at pains to show how Jesus moved on the face of the Old Testament, how He passed into the unsuspecting life of the Roman Empire, how He met and satisfied the moral order of the world, so that the satires of Juvenal appeared like an unpremeditated forecast of the very delinquencies Jesus could correct.

Then again the writer of history must be an expert in sifting evidence. The test of success often lies just here. Some intellects can by a swift intuition fly into the heart of a fact. Most men, however, are forced to debate the question pro and con in order to discover, as Luke says, the "certainty of things." That these first Christian chroniclers exercised their judgment with skill and balance is proven by comparison with the puerile portraits of Jesus which were produced in the second century. There Jesus appears as the worker of inconsequential wonders, the young boy endowing clay-birds with life; here He is the majestic monarch of nature and mind, the fearless Preceptor, the holy Guide. The jury of medical specialists which Renan demanded to test the Resurrection could not have been severer critics of hasty conclusions from insufficient evidence, than the four Evangelists were. They deserve, therefore, the respect of cautious inquirers and the confidence of pious believers.

Having framed a record in which scientific rules are strictly obeyed shall we hesitate to accept as true the facts they have revealed? The first problem in the study of the Incarnation meets, if anywhere, its solution here. If a man can believe the historical validity of our experience he has begun to understand the



message which the Bible embodies in various ways throughout its whole Revelation.

## II

We advance to the second problem which raises the question of power. For the personality of Jesus viewed as body or mind has certain well-defined values. It has impinged upon the natural order and taken its place among the fruitful influences of the world. It must be judged by the principles of science already known to us. Otherwise we should have to ascribe to Him a ghostly character, make of Him a Docetic Knight who trod the ether for a season and then disappeared. Now every problem in science awakes to two queries, How does the event take place and Why? These two queries we propose to follow here.

The person of Jesus is the vehicle of power. It is one form of the divine energy which spreads itself over the entire expanse of reality. To suppose that the universe has been split up into two air-tight compartments, mind and matter, each one independent of the other, or if dependent one but the shadow of its neighbor, is a gross and stultifying error. The energy we know is one, because it has sprung from the being of One. Therefore no new form can enter our experience to contradict what has resided here before. Power as we observe it is first of all physical. The stars studded in the abyss of space, the circling planets, the crumbling rocks, the fleck of dust are all charged with the same coherent force. Early thinkers strove to separate it into its elements, fire, air, earth, and water. More mature science grasped the notion of a law of gravity, mass and motion, the two constituent



factors. Present-day study has begun to crystallize the quest for a unifying force, tending to find in the electric current a common denominator for every output of power. But whatever be the elemental terms its varied compounds are beyond the ingenuity of the scientific mind to compute.

Then we rise to another level of power in the living organism. Whether there be a genetic touch between matter living and matter dead, is not the question here. We are content to note the operation of power. The power of an organism is something more than the sum of cells and tissues defined in the terms of chemistry. Some principle as real as the principle of gravitation has fitted them into a whole. The dust of the earth is gathered into an organized body and the body lives. One has only to hear the elephant crash his way through the jungled forest or watch the beaver construct his remarkable dwelling or see the dog spring at the sound of his master's voice, to know that a new form of power has entered the world, different from the other yet using the very materials that have made mechanism so full of surprise and wonder.

We take a further step and penetrate the region of intellect. Instinct, common to brute and man, is supplemented by the light of reason. Men begin to put impressions of sense together and to produce ideas. In other words, they think. A higher potency has broken upon the world. To test its novelty and at the same time its worth you have only to ask if reflection will carry its bearer to a conclusion which you cannot at the moment calculate. The things mechanical we can calculate, as for example when we compute the exact return of Halley's comet. We can also predict what type of action an instinct will give birth to,

though the precise direction be veiled. But man's mind is beyond the range of figures. Brawn, effective as it is, is surpassed a thousandfold by brain. Try to understand, if you will, the influence that the idea of freedom has exercised upon the mind of society as well as upon the forms of inorganic matter. Think how the feeling of order crystallized in government and law has changed the face of man and earth. Conceive how human love—its roots perhaps in the impulse common to all the higher organisms—has soared far above them and filled the world with the fragrance of sacrifice and pure devotion. That power such as this is divine precisely as the other forms of power are, neither the poet nor the scientist can deny.

Every one of these aspects of power is manifest in the life of Jesus, but supremely the last. It is His conscious personality which I find speaking from the pages of the Book. It is His insistent divinity poured into channels of power that I find exercising authority here. For I do not think of the Lord as simply encased in body, the body that you and I have. To me mind is superior to body, just as the human species is superior in impulse and function to a lower one. If it were necessary I could dispense with the question of His remarkable birth and manner of exit from the world. Physical genesis and death are not the salient facts in man's career. The supreme fact of man is his reflective moods. Christ was a man like us because He could think. The main point in the Incarnation is that God did not construct a new vehicle of power but used the finest mould already known. He made His Son a Person. He charged mind with currents of grace that from His day to ours have astounded the observer. If Jesus' personality denotes power, as the simplest

events in His life affirm, then we conclude that in order to make Himself understood the Divine Author was constrained to assume the garb of consciousness, so that human agents everywhere falling into converse with Him would recognize their own speech, their own words, habits, and thoughts, purified from mistake and moral inconsistency, and delivered to them in the unalloyed mintage of heaven. The scientific query How is answered in the language of St. Paul, "He was made in the similitude of man."

But a second query greets us. *Why* does God become man? It may surprise a good many readers to be told that science is asking such a question in its own sphere. If exact submission to law is its merciless prerequisite, how can purpose which may or may not be fulfilled have a place in its counsels? Can Force bend to the observing mind? Well, force does yield values over and above the mechanical work it does. For every time I construe the æsthetic qualities of a breaking wave I am introducing a fact unessential to the mechanical composition or physical pressure of a mass of water. But purpose for science has a higher ministry than this. Purpose belongs to the most intricate processes of nature. I hold a tiny sea-urchin in my hands and watch its behavior. It does not remain quiet, it is constantly in motion. Why does this tentacle move, why that? I am asking a question which some thought did not belong to science. Every reaction sustained by the tiny body has a meaning. It grasps for food, it shuts itself up against a foe. The organism, though infinitely less complex in structure than the leviathan of the sea, yet has every right to be called a purposive being.

It is in the conduct of man that purpose assumes

its sharpest outline. The purposive act is not a chance output of mental energy, it is the settled tendency of reflection. Thus, the act of speech in which Bergson reads the highest potencies of reason is a direct attempt to interpret my feelings to other minds, which I deem to have kinship with my own. The same impulse is enshrined in books and has installed the treasures of ancient Greece upon the shelves of modern culture. By the genius of Bell and Edison it whispers its syllables through the invisible currents of the telephone and restores to living auditors the very accents of the dead. At the command of the latest magician it vibrates in the waves of electric energy flashed by wireless over vast oceans. The whole career of man is astir with the movements of purpose in speech, and no less in action. You detect it in his business, in his social environment, in his political obligations. The elementary thought, the highly diversified industry is an answer to the question *Why* is this done. Hence the science of mind like all other natural inquiry is barren and void without a knowledge of the several ends which the subject can set for himself.

But it is impossible to confine the idea of purpose to the data of common experience. Divine science dealing with the imperishable values of spirit puts with new force the query whose classic lines "*Cur Deus Homo*" had won a brave and confident assent under the spell of Anselm's tuition. The issue is plain. The personality of Jesus is not imbedded alone in the stratifications of human history. It sends its roots down into the eternal principles of Deity. The purpose of the Cross is explained by the impulse of love.

This last phrase is a subsidy from our human psychology, but its meaning is superbly enriched and

is for the first time adequately revealed when interpreted by the covenant mercies of heaven. For an impulse belongs of right to the being which has the power to make it function. But an impulse is abortive unless it react to a stimulus from without. Man with all his emotional capacities is dumb in the presence of rocks and mountains. It requires the sensitive ear and a beating heart to elicit the melodies of human companionship. In the same way God by His very nature is potential in His love, and potential only until need arises among His creatures. Then love bursts forth in the crush of realized purpose. What, we ask, is the need, the spiritual stimulus, which awakes the undiscovered impulse to its strength? I answer it is the fact of sin, recorded in the still-born resolves of men and nations, in the bickerings of neighbors, in the slaughter of war, in the betrayal of innocent affection and the consolidated traffic of vice. The fairest fabric next to the divine has been stained and seared and seamed with unholy motives. A race whose mental promise has soared far beyond the mimetic thought of the brute is nevertheless in bondage, morally stricken, tangled in the inextricable web of its own devising. The need is sharp, action must be taken now or never. Shall divine love remain silent? Can love which always tends to express itself resist a sufficient cause? Shall the All-father decline to enter His own world and change spiritual perplexity into healthful order, falsehood into radiant truth?

In the darkness of the night the shock came at Messina. The earth trembled, quivered, gave way and engulfed tens of thousands of helpless sleepers, men, women, and little children, in its devouring rifts. Other thousands were crippled, homeless, starving.



The news was flashed at once around the world and in a few hours the great heart of humanity began to pour its treasures into the stricken city. Food and medicine, nurses and surgeons, were hurried from our Western shores. Congress for the first time in its history voted nearly a million dollars to aid a group of sufferers outside our own domain. The reason? Love for man, the philanthropic instinct, reacted to a mighty stimulus and could not, if it would, withhold the appropriate offering. Is it conceivable that divine Providence should pursue a path less exalted than this? When needs are spiritual and paramount in urgency, shall love remain dumb, inactive and pitiless in the impenetrable heart of Eternity? Science, which has its superhuman implications, replies with a decisive No. Purpose, the principle of life, claims its just and ultimate expression here. God will redeem the world.

### III

The problem of the Incarnation enters upon a third phase, perhaps the most difficult of all. How shall the facts of Jesus' life become reigning *motifs* in the music of faith? I am ready to admit, you say, that the record, so far as we can determine, has all the earmarks of genuineness. I can see how the usual dicta of science are borne out by the mode of revelation. The manger, the cross, the tomb and Olivet are securely fitted into the scheme of history. But the mind is not yet at ease. I cannot extract the practical meaning of these transactions; they decline to be part and parcel of my intellectual career. The difficulty is one which President King of Oberlin has called the "seeming unreality of the spiritual life." The values of ancient facts are



extremely difficult to state. If I could only get a demonstration as clear as that which attends the unfolding of a theory in Euclid, if I could light upon an ocular test like that which the chemist pursues in his laboratory, my mind would settle down to firm belief, and I should to all intents and purposes be a Christian.

In answer to this let us say first that your demand is for the precise objective which common opinion is always harping upon, but which in the last analysis is rated as of small consequence. Let us inquire into the case. If you are invited to invest in railway securities what sort of questions do you ask? You ask after the physical equipment—the roadbed, quality of rails, terminals, rolling-stock, signal system—and that is right. Then you examine the ledgers of the company to find out what the methods of bookkeeping are and how faithfully they are followed. Next you take up the balance sheet and compare assets and liabilities, studying the present earning capacity and the rate of yearly increase. Are you fully satisfied? The most important inquiry comes last. What is the character of the men in the company's management? But, I venture to ask, is that really essential? You have evidence of what they have done; isn't that enough? Enough, the answer comes, as to the past but not as to the future. You are concerned with the results yet to be attained, and these results depend eventually upon the judgment, skill, and moral responsibility of the officials. But these, I interpose again, are intangible items and cannot be reduced to figures or material weights. Still you cling to your notion that a railway is what its directors make it, and its securities are available only in so far as its management can be trusted. You are

right. The invisible habits of the human mind, the submerged motives that drive to action are the final arbiters in the conduct of business. The matter is sifted down to the fact that you must have faith in the men at the head of the concern, or they will never get a cent of your money. In other words, your interests are solely in the relations of soul, not in the prices of steel and labor. Shall religion be expected to pursue any other plan than that which proves its worth a thousand times in every social condition?

But Christianity is not content with dealing with the shadows of thought; it comes out into the open and is ready to offer the very standard that current skepticism asks. If something definite be needed to prove the power of the new faith a well-seasoned apologetic will give it. The evidence will be twofold. It will present a man who has exchanged the coarse and shabby cloak of selfishness for the pure garments of a righteous life. Monuments more enduring than marble are erected in the Pantheon of Christian sainthood. Resignation before which the Stoic submission of Seneca pales and crumbles, resolution more daring than that of Cato the Censor in his defiance of Roman wrath, the sweetness of temper whose fragrance absorbs the odors of sanctity breathed by an Aurelius—these are witnesses to the virtue of truth. If in each case we probe deep into the heart of the believer we shall find lodged ineradicably there the creed of Jesus the Divine.

To this public evidence we add another of the same kind. I mean the church with her Sabbath and her Word, her sacraments, her ministry, and her sublime hymns. To remove the church from the records of the past fifteen centuries would be to cut the heart out of

the forest's oak, sweep the recurring tides from the bed of ocean, blot the stars from the escutcheon of the sky and eliminate law forever from the purview of human history. The place of the Christian community is secure. Nevertheless, let us not mistake in defining the idea of the church. We do not in the first instance refer to a religious organism with its potentates and councils, cathedrals, creeds, and ceremonials, as the fundamental principle of the church. If the church be that and nothing more, then multitudes of people in every Christian country live and die untouched by the offices of religion.

But the church is all this and a good deal more. It is the testimony of spirits throughout the ages bound by unseen ties into unity of faith and charged at every point with loyalty to a divine Christ. It begins with the company in Judea, men of common blood and common spiritual ancestry. It expands under the magic touch of a new universalism held and preached by the young university man from Tarsus. It breaks into wider areas in the fourth century when Athanasius standing for the full deity of Jesus demands the expulsion of the heretical Arians from the communion of the church. It emphasizes its office as the dominant social force of Europe in those marvelously fruitful centuries which we erroneously call "dark." With clarion voice it courses the valleys and scales the hills in the garb of the preaching friars, disciples of St. Francis and Dominic. Then a new day wakes to glory, and out of uncertain vision and corrupt habit the note of faith is heard in more persuasive melodies. Luther and Zwingli, Calvin and Knox, proclaim the gospel of a Risen Saviour, whose salient merits and not the mischievous decrees of Indulgence open the

portals of hope to staggering humanity. Thus much has the church accomplished.

But her work is just beginning. The deadness that inevitably creeps over religious enthusiasm and strikes the fervid soul with the damp of death is but a challenge to her initiative. To Socinianism, to Deism, to the Skepticism of France, the word of inspired authority is spoken. Wesley, Francke, Massillon, lift again the ensign of truth, Christ the imperial Lord, and under their passionate leadership a new Evangelism takes hold upon the conscience of Europe. In due time under the pressure of enlarged social ideals the church fashions the world-wide scope of her mission. To India, to slumbering China, to Japan just escaping from her medieval Samurai, to the far-off Islands in their pagan obliquity—to these the church which maintains the Deity of Jesus has sent her choicest sons with the message of redeeming grace. Historical experience can yield no positive proof to the solemn verities of the spirit; but triumphs like these give point to the fact that not theorists who have stripped the robes of beauty from His form, emasculated His face, and made Him a creature like themselves, but believers who steadily through doubt and terror and the pains of death have held aloft the standard of the supernatural Christ,—these have brought the idea of the church to its present definition.

If still it be demanded that public evidence should add its voice to the consent of private faith, I point with no uncertainty to the Christian church and invite the questing soul to find an anchorage there.

## XIV.

### A LEGITIMATE CORPORATION

*John 14:23. "We will come unto him  
and make our abode with him."*

THE legal mind has been variously occupied with schemes for broadening the financial interests of the nation. It has recognized the natural instinct of social elements to unite for common purposes. The government of a state is the formal proof of man's ability to coördinate private desires and general good in a mutually satisfactory system. Primitive economics presents forms of partnership aimed at individual ends through joint action. If two men agree to pool their efforts and divide the catch after a day's fishing they are examples of the principle of co-operation which lies at the root of modern business. When the social fabric grows more complex, the terms are changed but the method remains the same, one man contributing the capital to the enterprise, the other the brains. The common denominator of mind and matter has been determined at least for commercial purposes.

In the industrial order of the present we have to deal with four principal factors—capital, skill of administration, skill in handling raw materials, and methods of distribution. To each of these factors there is a corresponding problem, but two are especially marked in recent economic history. The first is a

matter of money. Shall the entire capital stock be paid in, every dollar representing an exact equivalent in physical equipment; or shall a portion of the stock be merely on paper, assigned, perhaps, to him who promotes the scheme, hence only "water" and not a real investment? The second difficulty has to do with the relation of the company to other companies interested in the same line of business. Shall competition be eliminated and the smaller man forced out of business, bringing about a restraint of trade and a definite rise in prices; or shall cut-throat rivalry be pursued with the victory to the company which has the biggest surplus? The tangles presented to the jurist and moralist are cunning and intricate. It is extremely difficult at times to define what corporations are good under the law and what are not. The questions which face the legislator are fundamental in importance. It is perfectly justifiable for a group of citizens to seek to advance their private interests in healthful pursuits; but they cannot combine so as to interfere with the vested rights or natural expectations of other men. The frontier between legitimate and illegitimate corporations is by no means settled. Time and care and human justice alone can determine it.

The principle of union so manifestly a boon in material ventures has application in a realm more real. The interests are higher than economic needs; they impinge on spiritual destiny. Parties involved are not limited to men of flesh and blood. They include the worshipful presence of God. How shall the Christian mind envisage the union? Jesus frequenting the cluster-crowned hills of Galilee thought of the union of the branch with the vine, sap and strength being derived from a common stem. Paul, acquainted with



the Greek idea of physical perfection, took as his symbol a body responding to the directive power of the head. John and Paul and Jesus, too, likened the union to the sacred relation of marriage, where personal inclinations are lost in common love, and individual prerogatives in the service of the home. These are perennial types, old yet new to their age. To them we may add a more modern symbol whose spiritual values are nevertheless the same. For the idea of corporate life by which Paul explained the meaning of the church has been adopted in very name by current jurisprudence, and has assumed a place of cardinal importance in the growth of modern finance. If in turn Christian thought may extract lessons of moral consequence from economic experience, then ancient texts will be illuminated with meanings drawn from the realm of practical effort and breathing the struggles and convictions of real men. For God the Father, says Jesus, will come to willing hearts and organize them into a fellowship, bound not by the disputed terms of legal statute, but by the grace and truth of heaven. We, He continues (the pronoun becomes plural), will establish a permanent connection, an abode, a spiritual corporation, which shall defy the competitive attacks of foreign interests and secure an adequate return on investments.

## I

How is the commercial organization effected? The methods are various and must be carefully studied if we would gain some idea of the scope of modern enterprise. Let us select the most familiar, serving as an admirable parable for religious experience. There exist already certain companies, small, well managed

for the most part and successful. By themselves they can cover only a limited area of trade. The commodity produced is essential to the progress of the nation and is regarded by many as the barometer of economic health. Presidents and directors, salesmen and consumers, all realize that division of effort has eaten up profits and precluded an expansion of traffic. Just then a man of exceptional genius arises to propose a readjustment of relations. Instead of many scattered companies let us organize a common administration acting as trustee for the several bodies. The stock of every company will be equitably assessed and embodied in the general fund. Two results inevitably follow:—the executive expenses are appreciably reduced and the combined resources will enable the corporation to compete for business in markets hitherto quite beyond the reach of individual producers. The dream is fascinating, all the more so because the peculiar transactions total a sum which dwarfs the revenues and disbursements of all save the greater governments of the world. Can the dream be made a fact? Conservative investors look askance at the extravagant claims. Solicitors begin to consult their books for legal authority to construct so mighty an engine of business. Politicians stop to calculate what effect the new social phenomenon will have upon the course of legislation. Meantime, the genius of the promoter is at work. He has obtained the consents of stockholders and directors, secured favorable advice from legal counsel, and taken out articles of incorporation for a company whose stock reaches the incredible amount of a billion dollars.

To pursue the parable is unnecessary. The lessons extracted from the new fiscal order write themselves

plainly upon the sky. There is first the human situation itself. We begin, you see, with our feet on the earth. I cannot tell what the divine Lord would do with a race of men whose temper had never been spoiled by a lapse from honor. It may be that He would have entered His world in the presence of the Son, whether men had moiled and toiled in their sin or not. Fancy will dictate a thousand seductive schemes which might have had place in a world different from our own. But fancy is not our guide. The plain, unsophisticated facts of history alone suffice. The facts are these. High ideals throbbed inchoately in the heart of the race. These ideals sought utterance, as ideals must. The way was choked by scorn, by lawlessness, irreverence, lust, and hate. The ideals struggled for response in the individual breast, in the social conscience, in the governments of earth. Response was denied them. They were hampered by the attitude we call sin. If response had not been denied them these same ideals could have covered the surface of human life with a supernal light, just as commercial diligence might bring a necessary commodity to every home and nation but for the natural limits of time, energy, and faith. The situation confronting the dream of spiritual empire is very simple; it is sin opposed to the unconquerable optimism of hope.

Then enters the organizing Genius. He comes to make His abode. He has viewed with alarm the distracted conditions of His world. He has seen man devour man and nation destroy nation. He has probed the heart of Alexander and found there insatiable greed; of Mohammed and detected a clamorous vanity; of Caesar Borgia and been revolted by the hideous cruelties reeking therein. He has visited the shrines

of Moloch and seen tender children tossed into the monster's flames; He has watched from the streets of India as mistaken zealots hurl themselves under the sacred Car; He has penetrated the inquisitorial rooms of the Holy Office and heard the moans of accused heretics; He has noted the ostracism and blight under which sensitive souls suffer, because they could not in all conscience accept the modes and manners of a particular religious body. Then He has secreted Himself in the council-chambers of churches to hear the jangled chords from instruments that are tuned hypothetically to the melody of the spheres. He has sat in wonderment and pity by the side of laboring Christians whose ardent industry mingled with tears, perhaps with blood, brings such woefully meager returns. He has found the "whole creation groaning and travailing in pain until now," spiritual ideals shattered, a race undone. Is it vain to dream of correlation? Shall the divine pulse grow slack, stung by the pressure of a thousand woes?

I said the organizing power has entered. God comes to get consents. Mr. Morgan could never have formed the Steel Corporation without the voluntary adhesion of the constituent companies. The law respecting property rights forbade it. I see no reason to demand for religion a relaxing of any spiritual rights. The religious impulse, I take it, is not satisfied with candles or incense, the hum of antiphonal music or the low clang of the sacring bell. Nor is it profoundly moved by the logical precision of the creeds. Feeling and intellect share richly in the life of the obedient Christian. But the inward hush mistaken for repression is in fact a reply to the higher call such as Paul heard at Damascus and Livingstone by the factory's loom.

Christianity is interested in nothing save the whole man, body, mind, and will. It cannot conceive of a spineless religion from which every element of personal initiative has been eliminated. It is in essence alien to the type of education proposed by the "Christian Brethren" under LaSalle. That great leader was bent on reducing the pupil to a machine, by persuasion if possible, otherwise by the administration of the rod. He so far forgot the intrinsic dignity of childhood as to require the offender to kneel in the presence of the other pupils and thank his preceptor for having punished him. The principle is wrong. To absorb the individuality of a man into the offices of a church is contrary to the spirit of our faith. We may bring our intelligence into subjection to Christ but we never can surrender the right to determine what our creed shall be and what our specific duty in the world is. It is to the inherent power of choice that divine love appeals in its endeavor to shake men out of their mistakes and sins, and bring them face to face with eternal right.

## II

The mode of approach being determined, we must now examine the kind of securities offered by the corporation. It is apparent at once that they represent substantial values. I have referred to the current tendency of overcapitalization. The good will of a simple partnership is appraised at such and such a sum. In the more complex organizations good will has been stretched to cover many hypothetical expectations, often to the hurt of the innocent investor. But the legitimate company must have its stock exactly equated by its physical equipment, so that if need arise even



under forced sale the assets will never fall below the liabilities.

That the same danger is felt in the religious world is proven by the attempt to satisfy spiritual desire through ritualistic exercises. Can fellowship with heaven be won by a sedulous use of the prayer-rug five times a day? Can you appease an offended Judge by laving your person in the waters of a sacred river? Can a pilgrimage to Mecca though attended with penitential hardships cause a man to forget some flagrant sin and reorganize his life upon a safe spiritual basis? The values offered to the soul are not real. They are contrived by the fancy of the race and garnished by a thousand presumptuous promises. Christianity has another message rich with holy meaning. It exposes in merciless terms the nature of sin, its sulphurous heats, its withering breath, and the helpless crash of ambitions which will incautiously build upon it. On the other hand, it paints the vistas of the future with the roseate tints of heaven's morning, with assurances drawn not from the croonings of a mystic asceticism but from the bold appeal to faith that bursts as Man's challenge to man from the mouth of the riven tomb. These things are substantial verities, not wisps offered by an effete creed, not illusions started by an ingenious philosophy. The man who invests his time and energy in Christian service gets adequate return for every penny invested.

The securities of the spiritual corporation have a further distinction: they are permanent in value. The mercury of finance is sensitive, extremely sensitive. It is affected by the slightest economic or political change. If rumors of war are abroad the prices of the most seasoned stocks crumble abruptly. If an elec-



toral vote ejects one party and introduces another the market becomes hesitant and uncertain. Labor troubles, bankruptcies, a President's message, or the intangible element known as sentiment will cut big segments from the quotations of gilt-edge securities. If you put your trust in the stability of the money market you will be thoroughly disappointed. If you conduct your transactions by "margin" and not by actual cash you are liable to lose every dollar advanced, and suffer moral stagnation into the bargain. To the believer in Christian truth, however, there are few fluctuations in values. God does not become less divine because the earthquake overwhelms an unfortunate city or civilization meets its baptism of fire in war. The figure of Christ's Saviourship is not diminished because Judson is forced to preach for ten long years in Burma ere the first convert is made. If Marcion and Celsus, if Voltaire and Paine deny the virtue of redeeming grace can their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? If I do not succeed in crushing a wicked habit after a dozen determined trials, shall I count all spiritual life a desperate failure, curse God and die?

The antithesis, you see, lies between the change of human feeling and the permanence of truth. The same contrast appears oftentimes in the quotations of the market and is reflected in the appraisal of the company's property. The stock is guaranteed by the solvency of the corporation. But even that guaranty may fail and through some unforeseen catastrophe the credit of the company may be swept away. To such a danger the questing soul is never exposed. The peace of mind which it covets finds its warrant in the Word of God and is supported by His character, two immutable

things in which, says the sacred writer, it is "impossible for God to lie." In this sphere there is no speculation, no risk, no sale on margin. Man's estimate of religious values may vary, but the truth of God's love abides secure. If you admit the Cross of Christ as a definite fact into your corporate life you are safe.

Still again the nature of the stock should be observed. It is of one class only. Many industrial companies divide the stock into two groups, common and preferred. The latter pays a prescribed rate of interest and is a preferred lien on the property; the former measures its return by the balance of earnings for the year. Experience has proven the practical value of the scheme, since commerce has its ebb and flow. But the same provision is not needed in spiritual interests. There the income is exactly proportionate to effort. It is impossible to divide the citizens of the kingdom into two groups and award to one a saintly dividend, to the other a return larger or smaller or none at all, according to the volume of business. Of course it is true that every member gets an accrued benefit from his association with the church at large, just as any taxpayer, Christian or not, reaps an increment in value to his property from the peace of the community secured from the moral influence of the church. It would not be fair, however, to make individual salvation depend on social help. If that were the principle at stake either you must at once get the whole body politic into a regenerated condition, or you must expect no man to obtain sufficient grace to tide him over the bar of social degradation.

The double classification cannot be admitted in religious experience. Its failure in the composite life of society is being written today in blacker terms than

ever before. If you make place for a military hierarchy, what would prevent it from involving the nation, a whole continent, three-quarters of the human race, in the grim issues of war? If you establish a privileged class, buttress it by convention, decorate it with sounding titles, give it a commanding place in political councils, what will hinder it from holding the other groups submerged, seething in vengeful bitterness, unable to develop the simplest functions of body and mind, hence disinclined at the moment of need to address themselves to the sacrificial defense of the nation? The principle of discrimination has not been absent from the Christian church. It has been only too active. It has evolved an antagonism of interests between clergy and laity by granting to one group a supersanctity of character. It is ordained that the priest alone shall have access to superhuman authority, that he alone may open the gate of salvation by the waters of baptism, that he by himself shall sip the cup of Holy Communion lest its drops should spill on the ground and the precious blood of Christ be lost. For centuries such a principle has kept the education of the masses in the clutches of a few, who have for the most part been unfit to prepare their subjects for this world or the world to come. The result was at first an ignorant people, and later in the awakening of the social mind a revolt from priestly privilege and an assumption of important offices by the state.

Against this double classification in the body of the church the temper of our Christian faith has always struggled. It has always had to fight a divisive tendency in theological statement. Two types of minds clash in the organization of a creed. The mystic hears the whispers of intuition; he sees straight into the

heart of God. The logician seeks to reduce his belief to exact phrase and orderly sequence; he travels by regular steps from the idea of God to the minutest problem of the individual life. How can we harmonize the two? The religion of the Orient failed because God could speak to man only through the reaction of common instincts on the subtle fancies of the poet. Christianity unites the two poles of thought by the magnetic field of Personality. Jesus is the Son of God and the Son of man. He and He alone can disentangle the elements of faith in the mystic's intuition and the reasoned argument of the scientist. It was He who stood between John and Paul, who linked that daring intuitionist of the Reformation, Martin Luther, with the correlating soul of Melancthon. Wide apart as they seem in religious formulas Bishop Butler, who taught the world the analogy between revelation and the causality of nature, and John Wesley, the apostle of immediate salvation, are not enemies at heart. They see eye to eye and soul to soul when Jesus the divine Person is unveiled by the inward sense. These men and others who never escape from obscurity may join the corporate life of the church, because while signs and creeds and names differ, the Man of Calvary has bound each by invisible chains to the hope of redemption through His sacrificial death.

### III

But how shall we state the obligations imposed on those who enter the perpetual fellowship? They come, we said, by definite consent. Is consent an arbitrary motion of mind, as Epicurus might define it? Men do not enter into business contracts in such a mood.

The will-to-act is based upon certain well-digested reasons. The contracting parties believe in the economic opportunity, the organic form, the arrangement of stock, the proposed rate of interest, the integrity and competence of the management. Therefore they are willing to invest. In other words, faith has assumed its right of speech; otherwise all finance would become a welter of conflicting timidities. The Christian community has an incentive no less controlling. The difference between knowledge and faith sharpens at this point. Knowledge deals with facts under the scrutiny of sense. You get your data by the axe, the lance, the microscope. You examine the object and conclude that it is iron-ore, cancer, typhoid bacillus. From empirical facts you begin to construct a science. But knowledge cannot reach very far. Comparison is essential to exact science and soon you arrive at a situation where the common factor is absent. You are forced to judge, to hypothesize, that is to say, to move by principle and not by fact. Science is unwilling to give up its obedience to things; nevertheless it is saved by faith because faith offers the instruments of progress. Faith transforms business from a paper-program to a mighty social force. Faith digs secrets out of nature's heart only to mould human life by their radiant truth. In short, faith is not the curator of intellectual curios, but the pioneer of exploration into undiscovered worlds of thought.

This, then, is what the spiritual investor puts into the fellowship of the church. Faith is applied as the dynamic of action. Let me show you how faith works. I can objectify it by the attitude of two men towards the Bible. The first student brings to the Book a wealth of historical knowledge and a shrewd critical



taste. He seeks to arrange the several parts into their appropriate setting. What is Exodus but an exposition of the ritualistic genius of Egypt adapted to the needs of the Semitic religion? What are the imageries of the Revelation but skillful expressions of a poetic temperament applied to the struggle of the new church against a power whose symbol was the sword? He also classifies the theological concepts of the Book, compares the cosmogony of Genesis with the cruder stories of the Euphrates Valley, identifies the dramatic *motif* of Job and that of the Medea; proves that the Apostle John was joined here with Philo to the philosophy of Alexandria, and contrasts the structure of the Golden Rule with the negative form of the same maxim in Confucius. The Bible is to him an object of appreciative criticism as well as of real admiration.

The second observer may or may not bring the acumen of critical insight to his reading. That does not matter. He brings a quality in advance of that; a quality which evokes a profound response in his soul. This man knows Job and Moses and the Apostolic body not as historical personages, dramatically conceived in a book, but as companions in the same conflict with himself. They have not only served with distinguished zeal; they have served for a principle, which is valid for the struggles of today. Hence, they are not so many figures passed like marionettes before the eyes of beholders; they are men who command attention. To see them is to emulate them. One might follow Dante's journeys through the realm of Paradise without ever surprising in the mind a desire to imitate him. Who would for a moment put himself in the place of Faust and submit deliberately to the challenge of Mephistopheles? But David the singer strikes



from his lyric harp silvery notes that thrill the soul with gladness. Jeremiah in his dark dungeon carries off the hero's part so consistently that millions have coveted a chance to follow in his train. Paul, chastised by enemies, forgotten by friends, worn to emaciation by his labors for the kingdom, yet dauntless in courage, insisting on the reality of his Gospel, making the wrath of man to serve the welfare of the kingdom—who has not resolved by moving heaven and earth to reincarnate him once again in Christian service?

The first student of the Bible brings knowledge to his task, the second student seals his inquiry by faith. It is he who makes the Bible a force in the councils of men. It is he who, passing by the edge of criticism and the excess of adulation, burns its truth into the heart of the world. John Bunyan plus the Bible makes allegory a social engine of extraordinary power. William Carey plus the Bible sounds the first note of doom to the hoary caste-system of India. To the virility of Luther's temper add the Biblical doctrine of justification and you change completely the spiritual map of Europe. Wherever a man reads the Scriptures with the intent to embody their teachings in action, there we witness the assured triumph of faith. Without faith it is impossible to win approval, because without faith life is impotent and vain.

The second thing which the Christian puts into his church is mutual interest. Modern finance has accepted the principle by employing the term "corporation." To incorporate a business is to weld its guarantors into an organic system where whole and parts subserve the same purpose. Members of the company, whatever their holdings, have a common duty to promote its welfare. Again the modern parable inter-

prets the offices of religion with rare fidelity. It is easy for men to maintain the comity of trade relations, inasmuch as personal fortunes are at stake. It is easy in many cases for a nation to preserve its integrity through an appeal to the historical past, the pride of position, or the instinct of self-defense. But how difficult it is for Christian brethren to hold the faith in love unriven is attested by a hundred dismal pages in the chronicles of the church. Shall the incidentals of creed divide? Scientific men of the most diverse schools have no hesitation in submitting their views to a common gathering for severe and impartial examination. Shall liturgical tests disturb? Artists whose work is as far apart as the exact technique of LeFevre and the subtle suggestion of Impressionism find a common studio for consultation. Is church polity a bar to union? Statesmen espousing antithetical views of civil government sink all differences in the face of an overwhelming danger. Why must the church be menaced by a thrust to the heart so soon as a few men, moved by judgments perhaps as yet immaturely framed, sound a strong discordant note?

The answer is, the average church member has not learned the meaning of mutual interest. The interest of the Christian corporation is not my interest, nor my family's interest, nor my denomination's interest, nor the interest of the church in my own nation. It is these and all other particular interests rolled into one. If Paul had so elected he could have split the Corinthian Church wide open by denouncing in turn each party as traitors, and holding his own policies to be the full residuum of evangelical truth. Was that his course? He could never have reconciled such a course with the responsibilities of leadership. What did he

do? He showed the impossibility of dividing the Gospel; he exposed the vanity of human slogans; he taught the need of coöperation, the enduring worth of the principle of individual liberty, the beauty of morality bathed in the glow of religious consecration, the impressiveness of the common service at the Holy Table, and the coördination of divine gifts in the conduct of the church. Then when his precepts had been pressed home the apostle's loyalty burst out in the glowing apostrophe of love, whose poetic lilt and fine spiritual fervor have held enthralled the Christian mind from his day to our own. He passed beyond the bounds of empirics and stood before the gate of the future. Love cannot die. Its terms are not exhausted by the quivering codes of earthly morals. That which is natural expires as a moth in the candle's flame. But spiritual values are interpreted by a higher destiny. If Jesus lives again the men for whose regeneration He died cannot find their permanent expression in the tomb. Life is reinforced with the warrant of love; it cannot be consumed; it is proof against change and decay. To the unfading life of love the Christian investor is beneficiary, and with him every believer who has sunk his treasure in the same mine of hope.

Where, then, is room for division, since interests are common? Shall the church take pride in her specific variances just to show the strength of her nature? Shall she covet the grim stains of sin in order that grace may lavishly abound? If there were no other reason why the guarantors of a corporation should stand together, a convincing one would be found in the unrelenting competition immediately before its steps. Competition is no less keen in the sphere of religion. Sensuous prizes, commercial engrossment, the scorn

and contempt of many scientific inquirers, the sluggish temper of the social conscience—enviored by these can the church of Jesus divide her thought and paralyze her zeal by petty bickerings over creed or ritual? The world is by no means subject as yet to the lure of the Cross. Millions of men have never even heard the name of Christ. Millions more have a mistaken sentiment respecting Him. The civilization of Christian countries is at times so near to collapse that anxious minds lift a prayer for some new revelation of power. The impending battle is not within the borders of the church but far away in the heart of paganism. We cannot afford to expose our own weakness. We need every ounce of strength to send the whole momentum of Christian consecration straight into the arena where war for social redemption shall be fought out. Mutual interest dictates the mode and degree of our responsibility. To implicit faith in God the devout disciple must add uncompromising fidelity to his fellows.

## XV.

### THE DIVINITY OF THE SCRIPTURES

*John 14:24. "The word which ye hear is not mine but the Father's which sent me."*

THE problem of inspiration is perennial. It has hewn a tortuous path through the controversial discussions of the church. If the sensitiveness of common faith had been more rationally trained many vexatious turns of the problem might have been avoided. From the very inception two parties have broken ground in this fallow field. Some have said that the church alone can certify to the character of the Scripture. The church is a divinely constituted body. It has received from the Lord the keys of heaven and the grave. Its will is authoritative. From the first its solemn duty has been to determine which of the traditional doctrines were truly inspired, and which were the pious utterances of believers. Therefore the Bible does not exist except as the rescript of the living church.

Against this high doctrine the second party has registered its protest. The church, such say, is not the parent but the child of the Holy Scripture. The nature of the sacraments, the function of the ministry, the contents of the creeds can be learned only by contact with the sacred text. If the idea of the church had not been carefully defined in the historical writings all knowledge of a spiritual community would have vanished from the earth. The church does not make

the Bible, the Bible stands sponsor for the church. Because of this relation no group of men calling themselves the "Church" can constitute a council or adopt particular oracles as its ecumenical program. To pretend that inspiration tarries, spins itself as an ethereal notion in the human mind, until Cyril of Carthage proclaims the order and number of the inspired books, is to put the Scriptures on the level with the Pandects of Justinian or the decrees of the Council of Trent. A book is divine not because men have ordained it so to be, but because the God of truth has passed His precepts through the medium of certain selected minds.

Thus, two currents have contended for the mastery. Which is right? The controversy has never been settled. It is open today as it was in the times of Tertullian or Calvin. Do we need to settle it? Is it possible that inquirers have approached the matter from a mistaken angle? No question can ever receive a conclusive answer by trying to square it with a ready-made hypothesis. The assumption lying beneath each doctrine is pretty nearly the same. The Bible is viewed as a sacrosanct volume to be judged quite apart from the common issues of human thought. It is a carbon copy of the mind of God, not a transcript of bitter struggles through which aspiring souls have passed. It is a book which when printed is placed on your table among other products of the press, but which you do not touch save with consecrated hands, lest somehow its potential threats suddenly thrust their thongs into your life.

I propose to treat the Bible as I treat my Shakespeare, putting to it the same queries I am justified in asking any book that seeks my suffrage.



## I

In the first place, I inquire what the book says about itself. It is definitely on record what men have said about the book. No book in all the libraries of criticism has been subject to such ingenious tests, furnaces heated seven times hot. If the Homeric poems had been torn and mangled with one-tenth of the critical fury, their meager shreds of genuineness would long since have wholly vanished. Homer would be an empty name. But despite such savage attacks the deeper feelings of the student have been plumbed. That famous skeptic of France, Ernest Renan, has found in Jewish and Christian histories the vibrant joy of sixteen centuries. With an effectiveness amazing in view of the insignificant contribution of many other works, they have ameliorated men's ills, shed comfort upon the despairing, cheered on the weak and held aloft the symbol of providence in a science-struck world. Thomas Huxley writes in the same vein. Religious feeling, says he, is requisite as the basis of conduct. Where shall we look for a true and adequate compound of faith and right living, if not in the Bible? Let the Biblical ideals be dissipated and the race of men will be forced to the brink of moral bankruptcy. Thinkers like these cherish no sympathy with the Christian scheme of redemption. They cannot, however, restrain the words of admiration that rush instinctively to their lips.

We know, too, what men of deep religious experience have said about the book. Very few authors in his generation stimulated the pulse of public thought as Carlyle did—a social fire, a cutting sword, the flaming hierarch of righteousness. In the heat of Carlylean

emotion suggesting a return to the elementary faith of the fathers, he exclaims, "It is the one book, wherein for thousands of years the spirit of man has found light and nourishment, and a response to what was deepest in his heart." Again, from the subtle brooding of his mind on the exercises of human genius, John Milton turns to the study of the book. What songs, he asks, are like the songs of Zion? what moral precepts so masterful in scope and reach as the utterances of the prophets? what system of statecraft so clear, so comprehensive, so efficacious as that taught by Moses and Christ? We are not surprised that valiant souls, Richard the Lion-hearted, Cromwell, Gustavus Adolphus, Lincoln, should forget the imageries of bard and novelist in the glorious sweep of faith as unfolded in this book.

Yet it is not the appraisalment of readers that we seek, it is the book's idea of itself. The average author preludes his work with a studied explanation of what he means to do. Sometimes you may read the whole book in the preface, and sometimes you find nothing of its heart there. How runs the current of this volume? No preface is needed to convey the sentiment of the whole. On every page even in that shrine of literary grace where the name of God is not mentioned—even in the story of Esther the voice of the divine Author is heard. The peculiarity of the Bible is that every writer declines to accept responsibility for his words. In strictly human documents brilliant trope and highly developed dialectics are carefully nurtured as our own creations. No parent, whatever his social grade, is so glaringly proud of his own child as the successful author. Here the practice is reversed. To another the authority of all sentiments is ascribed. There is no

uncertainty. "God spake all these words saying"—with this warrant Moses ordains the mightiest code of morals ever flung at the conscience of the world. "Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name"—the triumphs of military power are not to be compared with the persuasions of truth. "Thus saith the Lord"—Isaiah brings direct from heaven a new attestation of the ancient covenant. "The word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah the prophet"—a whole book blazes with commands, entreaties, adjurations, and assurances, whose electric phrase an untouched poet would seek in vain to reproduce. These men did not speak of their own volition; they were caught in the currents of supernatural truth, so that a later observer would impressively declare, "Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Even Jesus did not disdain to be known as the purveyor, not the author of truth. The sentences now affecting so profoundly the emotions of the disciples were tides in the great deep of revelation. He did not start them by His own impulse.

But sentences bursting with such extraordinary energy can apply only to the passing generation, like the sap that floods the branches of a tree and having brought forth flower and fruit returns again upon itself. Words, men argue, are unable to communicate the flash of power to dry and dusty parchment for the edification of future readers. Who would venture to confine the magnetic forces of nature within the hand-made dynamo? Yet just this thing has been done. Language, which is the crown of human endowments, serves as the channel of eternal verities. The Bible is careful to affirm that its earlier oracles are girt with enduring value; they can be embodied in written form.

In the mature hour of Hebrew thought when poetic fervor bows to the yoke of literary artifice, the Exilic writer frames an acrostic of rare beauty testifying to the sacredness of the Law and Prophets. "Thy word," he recites—and the lightnings of Sinai rage again about the Torah—"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." Remember, it is not what God at that moment is speaking to exiled heroes, who in the bravery of despair have turned to Him for help; it is the word which though long time buried is at length revealed to the sons of men for their perpetual use. The word of God becomes a *Scripture*, attested by the signature of His hand. It is not a congeries of disconnected oracles but a generic whole. Its coherence is so marked that New Testament men can aver, if we violate a single commandment we have dishonored the entire ten. Its authority is conclusive; Paul has no fear to argue that all Scripture is breathed by God. Finally, the Lord Himself with no secular idolatry for letter and time establishes the claim of the Book by saying, "The Scriptures cannot be broken." The separate oracles caught up by open minds, as messages may be caught by the skilled wireless operator, have now been coördinated into a permanent system of truth. This system of truth we call the Bible.

## II

The first witness to its unusual character is its own assertion of divine authorship. But Christianity is not alone in possessing an acute sense of revelation. Other faiths, notably the Moslem, repose the same confidence in their sacred volumes. Hence we dare

not stop at this point, since unsupported the Bible's claim may be as erroneous as theirs.

Let us go a step further and examine the manner of its composition. Influences are at work here quite unlike those which contribute to the making of a normal literary product. The book under review is on its face not one continuous narrative but a group of sixty-six units correlated in two grand divisions. Thirty-five hands, at least, have wrought in shaping its structural form. Thirty-five minds have written down the dominant thoughts of their day. For this reason we should expect to meet a welter of religious interests, a conflict of æsthetic sentiments, an unorganized variety of moral attitudes. We are surprised to find ourselves carried along by one prevailing wind, the spiritual vane pointing consistently to the theme of divine Redemption. It is not against habit to seek a common thesis and a characteristic style in the works of human genius. Could you mistake the shrewd insight of Plato in the several sections of his "Republic"? Does not the very choice of words in far-flung paragraphs recall his versatile use of language? Thought and diction weld the classic into a scientific unity. But, you say, documents have borne the impress of a variety of minds without yielding in any particular their wholeness of thought. The American Constitution is a case in point,—the most remarkable instrument, writes Mr. Gladstone, ever struck from the human mind by a single effort. I answer, many mental attitudes, a host of divergent emotions, entered into its formation, but over all and penetrating all was the Colonists' aspiration for liberty, a chance to govern themselves according to the dictates of a common conscience. This sense of unity is evidenced by the fact that a few weeks



only sufficed to register the will of the people in their new organic law.

Both tests of unity—of time and mind—fail in the issue before us. Let us examine the career of the Bible as respects each. Fourteen hundred years were traversed in completing its circle. For us humans time is not mere motion, the turning of the earth on its axis, the checking of days on the calendar; time is a series of atmospheres. Migrations of races register the changing complexion of thought. To resist such change is to clog or stop the wheels of time. On the brink of the twentieth century China, forty centuries old, is still China as Confucius knew it, and his antecedents for uncounted generations. It is a psychic unit. The Bible has its unity not because it has declined to pass through converting media but because, passing through these, it has charged each successive era with its own spiritual purpose. Thus, you may find in the early pages of the book certain definite traces of the ritualistic feeling of Egypt. Scientific research has elicited the fact that by the waters of the Nile religion had ensconced itself in a bed of liturgies, which for beauty, adroitness and purposive form are without a parallel in the ecclesiastical history of the world. Could human inspiration fall within its atmospheric glow and be dumb to the values of such spiritual habits?

Then pass beyond the spell of city life and sojourn among the hills of Canaan. Shall contact with heaven's burning orb, with the crashing forces of nature, with the needs of body supplied by the fruit of the earth and tree, leave the soul untrammelled, free, unresponsive to One who has formed and energized them all? Religion assumes a new bent. Instead of



gorgeous ritual, the smoking altar and the fragrant incense beget a more personal relation with God. Later still the Bible carries us forward to the giant-types of despotic government. We hear the clash of arms, the rattle of swords, the tramp of mustered troops. The world is now a military camp. The mark of progress is the defeat of empires. Nineveh, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, lay their hands upon the spirits of the good. Not what men can think or feel but what they can do by sheer might of body becomes the index of genius. The sacred books are vibrant with the issues of the new conflict. Shall the soul or the body conquer? Through the torrential rains of grim brutality the prophets make their way to the front, bearing aloft the hopes of humanity.

Again the scene is staged for a better era. The culture of Greece emerges, the flower of intellect blossoms in unprecedented grace. Kings and dynasties disappear from view. In their stead enter the philosophers and poets of the West. To think one's way to glory is the business of the new dispensation. Not to accept the authority of the ancients but to prove all things and hold fast that which is good becomes the watchword of success. If Jesus Christ was crucified, died, and rose again the third day, the fact can rest not alone upon the promises of Scripture but also upon the testimony of competent witnesses. The mode of thought is Aristotelian; example must support the principle. Mere intuition will not do. The Bible has been carried into the laboratory of scientific experience.

Yet even this is not enough; it must be married to conduct; the scheme of law conceived in Rome must lay its convincing maxims upon the sacred text. The

atmosphere is distinctly new. Never before have the men of Scripture stood face to face with the idea of a juridical settlement of religious cases. The world was confronted by a revolutionary dogma. The will of the individual is no longer supreme; it has been incorporated into a legal system. Imperial power lies not in armament or invincible eagles. These are obsolete. Power has passed from Cæsar's court to the court of justice. A case will be tried on its merits, and the humblest citizen like Paul will—barring accidents—have as good a chance for impartial judgment as the richest Senator. To say that Paul's mind was overwhelmed by the new idea is to record an exact historic fact. If you need supporting evidence read again the fifth chapter to the Roman church. To be justified by faith is to have the system of divine jurisprudence faithfully administered for my personal benefit.

It is thus that the Bible has come under the influence of contradictory civilizations. With what results? When the Teutonic tribes forced their way into Gaul they brought a new type of mind, a new form of social organization. Did they keep them unaltered? Ferrero has shown with adroitness how Cæsar's armies arrived in Gaul to find not a barbarous waste but the substantial marks of a Romanized civic life. The imperial idea of progress was regnant there. Such an alembic has the Bible been to the hopes of men. It has seized upon temperaments and social habits, and surcharged them with a single purpose. Time has not destroyed the unity of the volume. It has rather subdued the diversities of race to the intrinsic promise of Redemption.

The other test of unity is intellectual. If revelation can come only by the medium of mind shall we not run

the risk of losing a spectrum through some flaw in the glass? The risk would be fatal to other social interests. It is not so here, and the reason must be sought in an influence beyond the customary experiences of the world. For consider the types of mind in the Bible. I can present them best by a pageant of contrasts. You perceive at once the differences of attainment in the field of learning. Divine wisdom has never limited religious progress to the culture of the school. Nor on the other hand have uninstructed men been regarded as the only available wires for the inspired current. Moses and Amos, the scholar of Egypt and the shepherd of Tekoa, are equally smitten with prophetic power. The cultivated eloquence of Deuteronomy vies with the rough language of the hillside in communicating the message of truth. No less extreme is the contrast between men in their social relations. The king on his throne hymns the glories of religion no less feelingly than the obscure bard whose Canticles never fail to awake the secret affections of the church. The principle is irresistible. You cannot by conventional usage bind the subtle forces of the mind. Aurelius and Epictetus, emperor and slave, find kinship in the spontaneous expression of soul.

I note again a cleavage in the religious practice of men. Who could be further apart in vision than yonder priest, the exponent of an ecclesiastical system, and the prophet on the mountaintop, free as the air he breathes, expatiating on wings of fancy up to the cloudland of faith? Yet these two men, Ezekiel and Isaiah, give utterance to a single refrain. Two sparkling gems of Hebrew history, the Kings and the Chronicles, created the one by the seer, the other by the hand of priestly art, make no dispute over the fun-

damental theme that God will redeem His people. Then to clinch our argument we compare the moral fiber before it is touched by social habit and which despite the sear of contact persists unchanged. There is Nehemiah, a man of affairs, a man born to the executive's task. He is chamberlain to the king, he is governor of the devastated city of his people. He has the business instinct. No man can pull the wool over his eyes; no shrewd politician can deceive his analytic mind. Compare Nehemiah with the patriarch Job, a silent observer, a student of deep reflection, a proprietary gentleman who could sit down and think. These two men inspired by intercourse with their kind send out rich caravans of wisdom to the world at large. Though far apart in time and disposition they seek to unfold the precise thoughts which have found utterance in every oracle of revelation.

How shall we account for the kinship of theme? The fact is impressive. Scholars whose sympathies are alien from the Christian scheme have admitted its reality. The hypothesis of evolution, the psychology of imitation, have been called in to explain it. The mystery remains unsolved. Conflicting attitudes of mind and conduct confront us on the pages of Holy Writ; yet unity is distilled from their contact. I can read a parable in the building of the Cologne Cathedral. In the fourteenth century its foundations were laid under the superintending genius of a great German architect. During the next century substantial additions were made to the edifice. Then the work ceased. For more than three hundred years the stones lay cold and silent and the prayers of its devout founders went unanswered. With the renaissance of national feeling sequent to the remarkable ferment of mind, Germany

awoke to the fact that her noblest dream was not yet fulfilled. She sought and found an artist who could enter into the subtle feeling of the first artificer. To him the task was committed and by the aid of popular enthusiasm the vast pile rose in splendor till its two spires pointed their way into the sky of realized hope. By close observation you can see today the several strata of the edifice. Yet you forget its diversified forms in the commanding unity of the whole. How shall we account for the genius of the building save by the religious sentiment which in some undefined way has dominated the history of the nation?

If the Bible be one in its theme and purpose, as I believe, the sole answer you can give to the question we have asked is that the spirit of wisdom has guided the conception of every part, stripping centuries of their antagonisms and welding men's individual tastes into loyalty to an overshadowing mind.

### III

The third query we put to a successful book is, What is its subject-matter? What line of argument engages the attention of the reader? The Bible, we hold, is not a book of magic and should not be judged by extraordinary standards. It is a pious blunder to draw the circle of supersanctity about its text and warn off all scholarly inquiry. The problem of critical study is as to what the Bible actually says. I am not concerned in the first instance with Homer's personality. The *Iliad* may or may not have crystallized in the mind of an Ionic poet with this familiar name. Nor am I eager to uncover the poetic devices—figures, similes, types of character—which shine resplendently



in his verses. These are important but they are not germane to the real issue. What interests the student of classical literature is the noble theme carried triumphantly through twenty-four books, the endeavor to right an ancient wrong by the just punishment of the offender. When careful study has elucidated the theme, then by instinct we return to the person of the author, questing for the genius that has created the imperishable Epic. In like manner we examine the fabric of the Bible. What is the content of the Word? If Jesus asked for it so must we. And as soon as we have made discovery our judgment shall be as His was, "The word which ye hear is not mine but the Father's which sent me."

I find three inimitable doctrines emblazoned on the page. We begin with the doctrine of God. You must not expect a scientific treatment such as Parmenides tried to give to the One and the All. Hebrew reflection is not metaphysical, it has the concreteness of youth. It works by symbols. For this reason it develops truths which the simplest child can lay hold of, whose luster does not grow dim even for the experience of age. The God of the Bible enters our history as a unified Being. He has never been divided into Baal and Astaroth. He has declined to share his majesty with eleven coördinates in the Greek pantheon. "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord." His impact upon human life is that of integration. A divided God-head inevitably puts the interests of worshippers in conflict. If you desire the gift of eloquence from Hermes, of military prowess from Mars, the habits of love from Venus, and the merits of wisdom from Zeus, how, we ask, can you pay a concentrated devotion to these, especially if the gifts of one countervail the allot-



ments of another? The vanity of distributed worship was deduced by Socrates who sought the oracle of his conscience for ultimate guidance. This is the primary teaching of the Bible, that God in His essence is one and cannot be broken into constitutive segments.

But this is the initial step. God is not only one. Parmenides could admit that, and so could his modern disciples. God is a spirit, says Jesus, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. The second stratum in the divine Nature is intelligence, to which somehow the intelligence of man has been affiliated. To see how far the Bible has passed beyond the imagination of man you have but to compare the concept of a personal Deity with the imperial Being of the Vedas. Tied and shackled are men's souls by the integuments of body. Let us seek release in order that we may at length be swallowed up in the ocean of universal substance. Which shall be accounted the superior doctrine, man living eternally in communion with his Lord or man losing at death his personal identity, covered only with the icy peace of oblivion? Nor is the conception of modern philosophy the more convincing—God is the sum of cosmic forces, flowing in the sap of the tree, throbbing in the tides of ocean, rushing through air in the electric flame, thinking in the soul of man—God is everything, God is all. What sort of intercourse can your fatigued spirit have with Him?

Then note a third constituent, the highest. Mohammed had some insight into Deity as we have thus far described Him, because he knew the Semitic Scriptures. But now we part company with Mecca and the Koran. There is one God and He can reveal Himself. But when He is revealed at Mohammed's hands do you

discover the glorious emblems of love that shine in Christian truth? Is the God of Islam—implacable, unyielding—the same Lord who bends in tender sympathy over His sinful children? “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him”—does the Koran intone syllables that vibrate with such intelligent consideration? Do you see that dust-covered pilgrim? He is handing a slip of paper to a man of alien race. “What are these words?” his companion cries. “Does God pity the men of this earth and grant them help? Our Allah is only a judge, an autocrat, without mercy or pardon. Does your God love His children? If so, then your Bible tells what our Koran has no hint of.” The judgment of the Moslem is correct. The supreme attribute of divinity is enshrined not in the books of Arabia but in the sacred texts of Christianity. The Fatherhood of God is found here alone.

Then study the unique doctrine of man. To secular observers man is either technically complete or wholly depraved. If technically complete he needs no change; if wholly depraved his prostrations of body or chastisements of soul cannot cure him. Christian truth opens a new outlook. It affirms that the sentiments of heart are susceptible of development. It thinks of sin as a wrong attitude, a willfully wrong attitude towards God. But sin is not a permanent state, it may be subdued, it may be eliminated. The history of Israel is a parable, a mirror of spiritual regeneration. Scientific pedagogy has demanded for the child the same sort of psychological treatment which nature has granted the race. If the comparison be valid, much more valid is the parallel between Israel and the Christian disciple. For as the polygamy, revenge,

slavery, and polytheism of the nation were crushed in its successive struggles for national unity, so for the individual every sinful tendency may be surely thwarted and left behind in the upward push of the spirit towards its ideal.

Observe this piece of marble. It was found by a traveler in Greece. He carried it with its grime and soil to the Curator of the British Museum. By the skillful application of chemicals the original contour of the face was exposed. It was a specimen of art conceived in the sublime fancy of the earlier centuries, locked by some hap in the prison-house of earth, and finally restored to its primitive beauty. The Bible predicts a change as decisive as that in the heart and life of believers. The visage of God shall be recovered in mortal flesh. Where else in all the imagery of religion or poetry can you find a doctrine of man which so faithfully reflects the demands of science and at the same time the ardent hopes of the idealist?

We rise to the third level where God finds his revelation in the Personality of Jesus. It is not the first time that men have conceived of the incarnation of a God, but it is the first and only time that men have looked upon an incarnation which in every respect squares with what reason and expectation demanded. The fact of Christ is not forced suddenly on the consciousness of the race. In Genesis among the dim lights of man's infancy the seed of the woman is dedicated to the task of "bruising the head of the serpent." In the Psalms the Son appears as a mighty king, David's glorified antitype. Isaiah pictures Him first as the Branch of Judah fulfilling His mission of revelation, and then as the Servant smitten and slain for human transgressions. At length in Malachi He rises

as the morning sun with the balm of healing in His wings; and after four centuries of silence the heavens are abruptly riven, Jesus the Son of God appears, and the full promise of redemption is at hand. He comes not simply to unveil the divine essence to the astonishment of human eyes; He comes to make men good. The ideal so long foreshadowed is realized in His Person, and through Him in the character of the race. I can find in the bravest fancies of earth no anticipation quite so comprehensive as this. It is this fact together with those already noted which impel the student of Scripture to seek an origin for its revelations beyond the just claims of human intelligence, far away in the wisdom of heaven.

## IV

The last index to a book's value lies in its effect on human life. Has the book, we inquire, exerted a constructive influence upon the habits of thought and conduct? Sometimes the currents it has set in motion are visible to the naked eye. Thus, Mrs. Stowe's classic is noteworthy not so much for its cleverness of plot or shaping of characters as for the cry of resentment against a cruel system, which it awakes in the heart of a nation. Unite it with one or two other public situations and you can account for the outbreak of the Civil War. Follow the course of its translations into many tongues, and you will behold the upshooting of the love of civil liberty under its magic touch. This was a book which exposed a moral wrong. It is no extravagance to expect a profounder impression when the book deals with the wrongs of spirit. Hence we ask, What has the Bible accomplished?

It has given a new tone to social habits. Let us select one department. The jurisprudence of the Anglo-Saxon race is a compound of many forces, temperamental, legal, and empirical. From our Teutonic antecedents we get the idea of assembly for the trial of particular cases, from Roman law the idea of fitting statute to case with such precision that no disability should result, from actual experience we have learned that every man is innocent before the law until proven guilty. But the every-day precept of duty comes not from the forest, the Forum, or the law court, but from the Ten Words of Moses and the Christian interpretation of the same. In these the civil hope of the world has been enshrined. Here the emancipation of woman, here the rights of the slave, here the capacities of childhood have found their safest expression. Revenge has been supplanted by justice and imperial condescension by the noble art of mercy. The moral sense of the current social order goes back inevitably to the flame and smoke of Sinai.

Nor has the intellectual nerve of mankind been less acutely quickened. Letters reflect in some degree the sentient thought of the age. They make and at the same time are made by the social spirit. If a particular theme grips the mind of sage or peasant its expression in literary form follows as a matter of course. The new scruples of freedom playing on the Italian fancy invest Dante's journey through invisible worlds with exceptional charm. The Renaissance is dramatically unfolded in the Divine Comedy. In what terms? In the metaphors of Greece? In Latin aphorisms? No, but in the familiar symbolism of Scripture. To understand the grace of form you might go to Rome or to the groves of Tusculum. There



you will find its noble lineage. But if you seek the heart of this wondrous poem you must go to the burning plains of Mesopotamia by the river of Chebar, or wing your way to solitary Patmos. Dante is the prophet and apostle of the new era. Dante invokes the muse of inspiration for the embellishment of phrase and figure. Through such a medium, itself almost inspired, the Bible steals into the consciousness of the race, awakes the sleeping intelligence of Germany, calls Holland to its theologic tourney and the defense of national rights, regenerates the social habits of England, and prepares America to be the nursery of a new race. If the Bible be taken from Luther, from Shakespeare, from Tolstoi, and the poets of New England, what, it must be asked, have these men left to teach their kind?

Then study the influence of the Bible in personal experience. The ultimate test of its value is here. Can the message it offers constrain men to be honest, create a broad-minded charity and implant an ideal of conduct beyond the conceit of common prudence? The answer is in the life of the Christian believer. We begin to feel its charm in childhood, standing by the mother's knee as she reads in soft tones the ancient Psalm, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." We hear its challenge in maturer years when critical questions haunt us and doubts shut out the zephyrs of peace: "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me." Finally when the dews of death lie cold upon the brow and the pageant of worldly interests has vanished we may pray to do as Daniel Webster did. "Bring me the Book," said he. "What book?" asked the attending physician. "The Bible, the only Book." They read aloud the tender



words of the Shepherd's Psalm until the fourth verse was reached, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." "Yes," said Webster, "that is true; they comfort me." And with the words of inspiration upon his lips he fell asleep.

Can the Book which has ministered solace to mighty souls in the moments of greatest solemnity be accounted for merely as the secretion of ethnic genius or the scintillation of extraordinary intelligence? The judgment of thoughtful men is otherwise.

## XVI

### THE PEDAGOGIC OFFICE OF THE SPIRIT

*John 14:26. "The Holy Ghost . . . shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."*

THE office of the teacher bears an honorable history among the people of Israel. It makes its appearance at the threshold of the nation's life in accordance with an established mental law. Before the advent of Moses Israel was a collection of tribes possessing certain religious traditions but guided wholly by the judgment of the chief. That was the period of obedience, represented by the infancy of the child. To it succeeds the age of reflection, dim and groping at first yet with every promise of future form. Appeal is made to an instructed choice. The mind is no longer chained to the will of a superior; it is awake and active. The nation begins its plunge through the thickets of the desert. Unforeseen difficulties baffling the inexperience of youth call for a new type of leadership. The shepherd recedes from view, the teacher appears, first in Moses, then in a long line of successors. The organic law of Sinai becomes the historic textbook. Chieftain and judge, king and prophet, poet and sage conspire to interpret its truth. In the process of time schools divide over the meaning of its terms. Then the professional instructor assumes the duties of office. The freedom which marked the teach-

ing of the seer is lost in a careful subservience to letter. Zadok has none of the abandon of Hosea. Hillel is a shadowy suggestion of Haggai. To preserve the text is the ambition of the teacher. Therefore his manner passes into a proverb—"to speak as a scribe."

The new era opens, the new order is imposed. Will its Interpreter repeat the subtle formalism of the old? The change is at once manifest. The timidity, the servitude of the earlier preceptor is gone. The Teacher of Hattin speaks in the language of self-originated authority. The impression upon His auditors was electric. There was no display of dialectics, no citations from approved authors, nothing but the brilliance of a personality. Fascinated by His understanding of human needs, they compared His bold exposition of common texts with the servile repetitions of the scribes. They heard His rebuttal of official charges, and exclaimed, "Never man spake like this man." They confided to one another in the aftermath of His reappearance, "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way and while he opened to us the Scriptures?" The sagacious Jewish councilor with unerring judgment grasped the fundamental mission of Jesus—He was a teacher come from God with the most convincing credentials that a teacher ever bore. All these facts prove that instruction of mind is the basic principle of the Christian faith. The ultimate leader of the religious life is not a creed-maker or ecclesiastic or master of magic, but a trained teacher of men. Hence the Spirit of grace who succeeds the Christ of history in the ministry of the church is foreshadowed as one who "shall teach you all things."

What are the elements that enter into the pedagogy of religion?

## I

We begin with this, that the preceptor must be acquainted with the mental habits of the pupil. The child is presented for guidance. Who is he and what can he do? Various accounts have been given of his equipment. Take this from Pestalozzi. "Sound education," he says, "stands before me symbolized by a tree planted near fertilizing waters. A little seed which contains the design of the tree, its forms and proportions, is placed in the soil. See how it germinates and expands into trunk, branches, leaves, flowers, and fruit. Man is similar to the tree." The observation of the sage is just. Perception, memory, the making of concepts, emotional qualities such as love and curiosity are natural capacities wrapped in the integuments of mind. It is the duty of the teacher to surround his students with a glow of thought which will develop their gifts as easily as a flower responds to the coaxing warmth of the sun. To do this he must entertain a wholesome respect for the things that interest them; he must determine that every course of study shall be not a yoke of coercion but the challenge of a fascinating exercise. He will see to it that instruction comes in the order of a child's susceptibility to it. Milk for the infant, strong meat for the man—is the regimen of nature, and the wise preceptor follows it faithfully.

Manifestly Jesus pursued a method such as this. He recognized the primitive law of mind that we rise to abstract thought by way of the single image. For example, while He taught Nicodemus the profoundest

truths that ever fell from human lips He nevertheless used the simplest facts of nature—wind, birth, likeness of kind—to illuminate His message. The matter-of-fact pupil was confused at first and inquired how these things could be. Later I suspect the spiritual implications burst upon his mind and fed its eager hopes for years to come.

The principle is fixed in the science of religious education. For examine how the young Pharisee passed through the ordeal of conversion. Here was a student equipped as few have been to reason His way out of the labyrinth of conflicting doctrines. That He utilized every argument in support of His former position the sixth and seventh chapters of Romans tell us clearly. But the only conclusion He could arrive at was frozen in the icy interrogatory, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?" The cry is upon His lips a hundred times, never so imperative as at the slaughter of Stephen. In the tides of persecuting fury the answer tarried, but at length it rushed forth not in the exegesis of texts, not in the abstractions of a creed, not even in the cameo language of a basic law, but in the concrete form of a person—"through Jesus Christ our Lord." The definiteness of the reply carries its own lesson. Great as Saul of Tarsus was in mental equipment, learned as he proved himself in the subtleties of Jewish law, his new birth must be won in the way a child wins knowledge of himself. It is folly for you to explain that however rapidly images change the current of personal feeling is one. "I am I"—is the inevitable retort; no further proof is needed.

The spiritual Saul came to himself the moment he stood in the presence of Jesus. Men always begin their

career of faith by a look at personalized love. It is the rallying point of understanding. If I presumed to tell an intelligent seeker all my theories of the origin, course and fulfillment of Redemption I should at once confuse his mind and prejudice him against the religion I was trying to expound. Why? Because I had failed to follow the initial principle of pedagogy—not rules but the appropriate example. If, on the other hand, I put my inquirer in the immediate neighborhood of the Cross, if I can get him to see that the wounds are real and the death scientifically certain, if I can induce him to find in the Seven Words evidence of a forgiving spirit beyond the habits of the world, if I can join Christ's sacrificial death to the patient self-denial of His life, then I shall present to the faith of a man the image which it normally craves. Reflection will make the application certain.

But the human mind does something more than react to its environment. A machine can do that. So long as its parts remain in place without wear it will perform the same movement indefinitely. Set your motor at work, give it gasoline and a little water, and by an occasional opening of the valves to expel the collected air you can run your car with speed and comfort for hours at a stretch. The soul of man is a more subtle mechanism, as every teacher knows. It works, it works with amazing regularity. You open your eyes and a flood of waiting sensations break upon the mind. No effort, no resistance—nature follows her bent! If the story were finished there it would still be one to startle the serenity of the gods. This, however, is a bare beginning. The normal mind expands, grows, is subject to progress. What shall we do with the myriad facets of curiosity which appear with the rising



sun? The problem of education is acutest at this point. The medieval student had to pass the drill of logic and rhetoric in order to be admitted into the ranks of the laureate. Under such rigorous treatment the spontaneity of individual impulse evaporated. What the mind needs is room—room to work, room to play, room to discipline its refractory forces. It is this threefold exercise which the divine Spirit has adopted in the training of conscience.

Effort, says modern pedagogy, is the first law of nature. With the skill of a poet Froebel has combined the movement of hand and mind in the act of learning. Let these blocks awake the primitive building instinct. The cube broken into its parts reveals shape, angle, distance, local arrangement. Before the pupil is aware he has formed the outline of a house and acquired at the same time the essential axioms of geometry. The principle of effort enters correspondingly into religious experience. Faith is not a fruit that can be picked bloom-ripe from the tree. It must be carefully nurtured. It demands no less exertion than the spider's spinning of her web, and is precisely as natural. The time was when theologians counseled the inquirer to sit down quietly and let the ministry of heaven develop a spiritual character. It was thought to be a reflection on the power of God to have a man add his mite to the sufficiency of salvation. The theory is mistaken. If a man does not summon every ounce of energy to work out his own salvation he will have a desperately shrunk soul to present at the last to his Maker. We are bound to employ every available means—Bible, prayer, church, correctness of conduct, the duties of citizenship, hospitality, and a benevolent regard for the race—in order to keep our spiritual life from being

more than a subtle sham. This is the tuition of the Spirit.

The second form of activity is play. Froebel based his celebrated method upon the principle of motor expression. "Play," he says, "is typical of human life as a whole, of the hidden natural life in man and all things. It gives joy, freedom, contentment, inner and outer rest, peace with the world. It holds the sources of all that is good." Certainly the games of childhood mirror its simple grace and unaffected delight as formal lessons cannot. Into them the full strength of body and mind is flung, while from their zest come valuable emotions to enrich and strengthen the personality. Shall religion decline the spice and thrill of recreation, the antidote to care, the impulse which, when common work fails, surely knits separate souls into one fellowship? It is this which accounts for the dance in primitive worship; it is the same feeling which today in the diapason of song lifts a great audience to the ecstasies of faith, as the fervent eloquence of the preacher can never do. In obedience to its call we abandon the fatiguing round of service, and in some sequestered nook hold communion with nature's visible forms or sink into revery over the pages of a compelling book. I am wholly persuaded that religious grace steals from the playtimes of life into the secret haunts of the soul.

From the gay we pass to the grave, as shadows pursue the sunlight across the landscape. Tuition is hopelessly at fault without the application of discipline. Montaigne condemned in sharp tones the inhuman methods of this day. "Instead of tempting children to be better by apt and gentle ways, our pedants present nothing to them but ferules and rods, pain and

cruelty." He advocated a genial treatment of pupils—"green leaves and fine flowers rather than the bloody stumps of birch and willow." He would paint a school room with joy and gladness, Flora and the Graces, uniting intellectual profit to emotional pleasure. It is true that we cannot impart learning at the crack of the lash. The mind of childhood rebels. Nevertheless, Herbert Spencer has pointed out the inevitable need of correction. Nature disciplines her children by direct and fitting penalties. If the arm be not used it will lose its strength. If the memory be not invited to receive fact and fancy its powers of coherence will soon disappear. The same law is in force in religion. He who declines to bend his knee in prayer will ultimately in the hour of stress find his way to the throne effectually barred. The culture of the Spirit is sharp. It confronts the sensitive soul with situations which veteran courage might shudder to meet. It compelled John G. Paton to labor many slow and lingering years amid the most intimate dangers, ere the first convert was won. It shut up rebellious Saul in the Damascus house, sightless and alone; it sent him into the irritating solitude of Arabia, forced him at Jerusalem to face the suspicious looks of the church he had persecuted, and finally, consigned him to eight years of waiting at Tarsus, until the opportunity for service arrived. Discipline is stern but it attains its end. What Paul would have been without his rigorous training we can only surmise; what he became under its urgent goad all the world knows. To eliminate the rod of correction would be to leave the Spirit's work crude and unfinished.

But what is the end of discipline, and what the end of work and play? Let me say at once, its end is to

construct perfect Christian manhood by developing the resources at hand in each particular case. This does not mean that the spiritual mould is single—a Peter, an Apollos, a Paul. Thomas à Kempis presents a mystic temper so discreet and penetrating as to make him the ideal character of his generation. But this fact cannot stamp mysticism upon the church as the sole method of Christian nurture. To attempt to educate John Knox into the cloistered placidity of the medieval saint would be like changing a hurricane into the balmy zephyrs of summer. The genius of the divine Spirit is found in the versatility of his pedagogic treatment as respects the individual. On a wider field also the same method is used. Sectarian differences are regarded by some as vicious ruptures of the Lord's body. From the earliest moment Christian men have disagreed as to the rules and habits of ecclesiastical practice; they had to. Temperament determines practice, and diversity results. Hence churches emphasize the emotional or the intellectual or the practical side of religion—liturgy, creed, service. But neither of these by itself constitutes the church. It is only when they have been harmoniously joined that the true body of Christ appears. In precisely this way the Christian character assumes its proper form. Thought, feelings, will enter into the complex of the spiritual life. By cultivating each in turn and all together the divine Teacher moulds His pupils into the eternal manhood of their Lord.

## II

We pass to the curriculum of religion. In secular education the scheme of studies at present is in a fluid and fluctuating state. There was a time when Latin

and Greek covered the attainments of the cultured gentleman. Later, after a bitter struggle, history and the vernacular languages gained a foothold in the schools. Finally, the quarrel narrowed down to subjects which give drill and those that furnish content. Both types of knowledge we think are essential to education. The student, as Spencer contends, should acquire some familiarity with the every-day sciences, but he should not spurn the nice distinctions of logic or the abstract values of mathematics.

Fundamental differences have developed also in the school of religion, and feelings have been powerfully stirred by virtue of a new need, that to the interests of the present world the expectations of the world to come must be added. Theologians have wrought out stratifications of creed, following the lines of cleavage we have just noted. Since every one of these may be verified by Scripture, the advocate of each regards himself as occupying a favorable position. His mistake lies in making any single dogma the touchstone of authority. To see its permanent meaning we must get the full text of Christian truth, and it is this truth which is embodied in the message of the divine Teacher.

He begins with the presentation of Jesus. His instructions were foreshadowed by the words of the dying Master. The advent of the Holy Spirit is inseparably linked with the person of the Lord. The one is the *alter ego* of the other. So long as the visible Christ remained in the world of experience, the invisible Christ could not manifest Himself to aching hearts over the whole domain of earthly life. But when the heavens closed about the escaping Form, then His solace and tutelage would be mediated through



more spiritual channels. His disciples would hear not with the ear of the body but with the understanding of the mind. The Spirit would descend to them on a mission from the Father but in the name, that is, with the authority of the Son. The subject of His instruction would be unique. He would testify of Jesus, would glorify Jesus, would bring to their remembrance all things whatsoever Jesus had said unto them.

I am amazed as I read again the circumscribed program. I could fancy that when the church came under the new inspiration it would have found a complete interpretation—type and antitype—of the ancient order; it would have detected the eternal principles vital in Moses, David, and Isaiah; it would have heard again the mighty tones of the ancient Jehovah. Yet instead of familiar oracles we are confronted with the name and fame of Jesus. Instead of defining sin in terms of the Mosaic law, sin can now be determined solely by a man's attitude towards Jesus. Instead of framing a righteous character at the touch of noble ritual, a man can know righteousness only after Jesus' obedience to law had been justified by His personal exaltation. Extraordinary assumptions like these are to be found in no other religious system. They mark the writers as mental delinquents, or else as possessed of an imprescriptible right to make them. A middle point does not appear. They stamp themselves as the more extraordinary in view of the fact that competent witnesses have accepted the centrality of Jesus as entirely warranted. When Peter, who assessed the doctrines of Judaism with the skill of an Aristotle, when John, who entered critically into the Alexandrian theory of divine emanation, when Paul, who knew the psychology



of Greece and applied its rules to the primary questions of conduct—when these and hundreds of the same intellectual girth gave soul and body to the preaching of safety through faith in Jesus, the assumption of the Tryst-room is no longer an isolated hyperbole. There was good reason for the uniqueness of subject-matter in the school of the Spirit. What was it?

The answer is embodied in one of the profound discoveries of modern pedagogy, viz., that knowledge is organic. When Jacotot was installed as Professor of French Literature in the Louvain University, whose recent fortunes have been unspeakably sad, he was surprised to find that a large percentage of his students could not speak French. The language of Holland, their mother-tongue, was alien to him. How should he communicate with them? He laid before his class Fénelon's "Telemachus," printed in both languages. He required them to memorize the French sentences and puzzle out their meaning by comparison with the Dutch. In a very short time he brought them to a working acquaintance with French grammar and dictionary. They became masters of a new tongue by the study of a single book. He could not escape the conclusion that "all is in all," and needs only well directed effort to be pried out. The principle is momentous. It is the very principle which Leibnitz ascribed to his Monads; they opened windows upon the world. The grain of sand, too small to be examined with the naked eye, conceals the structure of the universe in its tiny form. Thus the person of Jesus becomes the focus of explanation for the facts of the world. Paul does not scruple to swing his cosmogony about this center. Peter cannot dissociate his escha-

tology from the glory of the same Christ. The history of nature with its apparent scars, its sores and tumults, its birth-pangs and cruel evolutions, can expect a happy issue only in the application of His laws. The heart of man, passing through a myriad throes of anguish, misled by shadows, discouraged by false customs, betrayed by sham reformers, prostrate before unsubstantial gods—the heart of man can find its renewal at the feet of Christ, and nowhere else. The fate of man and nature lies in the hands of a Person, who exposes in a form hitherto unsuspected the very deity of God. Because Jesus is divine, His centrality in the Christian scheme, far from being an extravagant assumption, is seen to be the base upon which the unity of the world rests. Therefore, the creed of the church begins and ends with Him, just as Thales found in water the governing principle of material substance, just as Spinoza conceived of God as somehow coterminous with nature.

The demand of this verse carries with it a stinging rebuke to the habits of theologians and a sharp criticism of the traditional manner of teaching dogmatics. For the appeal of rational evidence as to the existence of God with which most handbooks open is a gross prejudgment of the case; and the distinction between natural and revealed theology is a sheer begging of the question. Christ is written upon the forces of earth, air, and sky as indelibly as upon the page of Scripture. Only let the principles of revelation instruct us how to interpret the laws of nature, and instantly their hidden and mysterious courses are brilliant with truth. Jesus is master equally of the electric flash and of the mind's swift impulse. "All is in all," as Jacotot rightly says.

Next the lesson of the Spirit is specialized; he deals with the *words* of the Lord. There are just two ways of understanding a man's life, by the words he utters and by the acts he performs. For the average biographer both sources present serious, sometimes insuperable difficulties. Language may be used to conceal thought; but granted its genuineness we face a problem both objective and subjective;—objective because we are not always sure whether we have an exact report of his utterances and therefore a just statement of his intent; subjective, because the agent himself may have been uncertain as to what he thought upon a given theme. But the difficulties in the field of action are graver. For when you have determined the exact facts of the case, the interpretation rests ultimately with the biographer, who, do what he will, cannot wholly exclude the personal equation from his account. Hence the line of conduct, to one observer strictly honorable, appears to another mind all but reprobate in principle. Did Judas betray his Master for the purpose of securing an immediate declaration of his kingship, or was he ruled by the sordid lust of gain? In the critical event of Jesus' life was the Cross the instrument of fiendish malice or was it the sovereign expression of love? If the Cross be honored as the symbol of atonements, how shall we define its terms? Is atonement won by force of example, by the vindication of universal law, by sacrificial substitution—how are we to analyze out its elements?

The problem of interpreting Christ's public career is extremely involved. Yet so is the explanation of His discourses. No man can attentively study the sermon on the bread—whose lesson was that spiritual life for mankind sprang exclusively from the eating

of His flesh and the drinking of His blood—without exclaiming as the disciples did, “This is a hard saying; who can hear it?” Who indeed can hear and comprehend it? For out of its cryptic epigrams the church has woven three or four separate and conflicting dogmas, and over their demonstration one bloody war, called by the Sacramental name, has been fought. Nevertheless, the calm assertion, “I am the bread of life,” if left to itself and disentangled from the controversy over Jesus’ act in instituting the Supper, would have remained a full and final definition of spiritual satisfaction. The Holy Spirit is charged with the duty of rehearsing Christ’s words, because they more infallibly than acts predicate His essential character.

There is another reason not unfamiliar to the customs of men. We need a standard of judgment, a foot-rule by which we can measure all subsequent revelation. It is plain that Jesus measured ancient doctrine by His own and boldly challenged its imperfect maxims. Against the prudential force of the Mosaic law He places His own complete inspiration. In the light of history we expect no less from the teaching that follows His day. If Paul’s arguments do not square with the words of Jesus, then we are at liberty to expunge them from the sacred records. They are out of place there. But exact exegesis and sympathetic interpretation prove that every doctrine of Paul lies embedded in the heart of his Master. Take the strictly Pauline creed of justification by faith. Jesus seems to lean towards works as the conclusive proof of religious health: “Not everyone that saith . . . but he that doeth.” The antinomy, however, is only in form. Paul is fighting with all his soul’s fire against the

complacency of the Pharisee. Faith that burns bright with the artificial stimulus of ceremony and evaporates at the pinch of hard service, such faith is the subject of contempt both to the apostle and his Lord. Enduring faith is anchored not in the shallows of personal merit but in the deep waters of divine grace. Again, if prophetic utterances are frail supports to truth except as they are fibered by the word of Christ, what shall we say of spiritual edicts promulgated since the canon of Scripture was closed? A modern instance challenges attention. Can infallibility pass from the invisible Lord to the person of His self-appointed Vicar? The warrant is clothed in prescriptive authority: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church"; "Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven." Peter, the craven-hearted, is officially installed as the vicegerent of Christ on earth. The papal throne being his hereditary seat, whatever issues from its curial judgment is imperishable truth. Three facts negative this claim—bad exegesis, a glaring historical hiatus, and the moral character of the Papacy for many centuries. The first one by itself is decisive. The church has no right to formulate any dogma save that which is bound up with the spirit of the Lord's revelation; and there is not the most meticulous point of evidence to prove that He ever entrusted the final destiny of souls to other hands than His own.

The third fact in the teaching of the Holy Spirit is that the words of Jesus must become an integral part of the life of the church. I find this fact stated in the words of the verse, "He shall bring all things to your remembrance." Memory is one of the sure tests of individuality. If a man be unable to identify his present experience with the place and persons pre-



viously observed, how shall he ever merge his conscious acts into the supreme thought of a Self? Memory is the self working earlier experiences into new relations. The choice of this term is not accidental in the language of the Lord. He affirms that His truth is already latent in the mind of the church, and that the church will understand its meaning at specific periods in her history. The first occasion for its appreciation was found in the making of the Christian Canon. Some men have pictured the words of revelation as dropped by magic into select minds to be committed faithfully by them to enduring parchment. The fallacy of this explanation is exposed by contact with scientific psychology. For supposing that Deity might work in that way, yet no mind can take in any fact or law which it is unable to establish in organic relation to experiences already registered. The primitive church passed under the spell of Jesus' preaching, and in the course of time her testimony based upon this hardened into a deposit of faith, which under the hands of Matthew and his fellow-craftsmen became the official pronouncement of the Spirit. The temperament, the bent of sympathy, the individual angle of vision are manifest in each author's work, and ratify the conviction that the Bible came into being not because unsuspecting minds were charged with a miraculous current of inspiration, but because devoted spirits converted their private experience into the fructifying terms of common speech. "The words that I speak unto you," says Jesus, "they are spirit and they are life."

We have no doubt that in grappling with the problems of metaphysics and social practice primitive believers proved themselves apt pupils of the invisible Teacher. They brought to fine efflorescence the germ-



inal truths that had been planted by their Master. Has that aptitude been preserved by the church? The query is of perennial interest. We are sure that the final meaning of Jesus' revelation could not come to the bar of Scriptural expression for the simple reason, that the situation in church and state during the first century did not call for the settlement of issues, which only later crises developed. Thus, we know how the bitter struggle for social equality broke upon the infant community in Jerusalem, and how James, the acknowledged leader of the group, checked its menace by reference to the words and habits of Christ. The foundation for all Christian economics was laid there. But the practical mind of James could not anticipate the formidable problems which were to face the church at the opening of the twentieth century. Capital and Labor once acting side by side in the apprentice shop or the ripening field now stand as two armed camps, each waiting for the advantageous moment to strike. A broader interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount awaits the thought of the church. The principle of action will not be new; for every possible thrust of human impulse was anticipated by the unerring Preacher. He knew that the world we live in—physically and morally—is fluid, and that the truths we are able to extract from its forms are fluid, too. Hence he foreshadows the justice and human sympathy which must surely rule in the ultimate settlement of social problems. Just how his solemn principles can enter obtuse minds and be fertilized there, only time and the genius of Christian statesmanship will determine. The school of divine instruction is unquestionably hard, but its lessons are the inevitable guides to faith and practice.

Even more momentous is the "remembrance" of Jesus' words in the sphere of natural science. At its gates modern Biblical criticism has stood silent, maintaining that the Book is the vademecum of the closet, not of the physical laboratory. Doubtless it recollects the imposing buffoonery and the wicked cruelty which attended the church's attempt to dictate scientific theory. The blood of Bruno cries from the ground. Nevertheless, the teachings of the four Gospels are full of the most penetrating insight into the laws of nature. Evolution has been hailed as a doctrine unheralded in the meditations of the classic authors, and contrary to the traditions of Moses. Aristotle, to be sure, knows something about the law of genesis and decay, but his law finds application in the static universe. The idea of progress is unknown. Shall we say the same of Jesus? Let me warn you not to try to decipher the exact terms of science from His language. He speaks in parables here as in His religious aphorisms. Yet in the fifth chapter of John we find this gem of thought inlaid, "My father worketh up to the present, and I work." It is a compendious exposition of His own act in healing the lame man on the Sabbath. The projected end of all work is rest in contemplation of its successful issue. The particular work involved is the making of a whole out of torn and scattered units. To secure this a continuous correlation of forces is necessary. God works, and works towards a unifying end.

The modern name for such effort is development. What Jesus did in the symbolic cure divine power had been doing throughout the reaches of eternity. The six dramatic scenes of Genesis are cross-sections taken from a growing world, not instantaneous blocks of

creative exertion. On the mystic heights of Hebrew fancy, one man here, another man there—as in the eighth chapter of Proverbs—caught at the same appalling fact. But Jesus with consummate skill gave the fact its intelligible form—“My father worketh up to this moment.” I do not say that Darwin was conscious of unfolding a text of Scripture when he wrote the “Origin of Species” ; he was not a homilete, and had no more interest in Biblical study than the average scientist of his day. But literal repetition counts for nothing. The historic point is that the greatest discovery since Newton was made by a mind distinctly under the influence of Christian ideas, and that the founder of the Darwinian hypothesis became the unwitting interpreter of an inspired doctrine, which had lain unelucidated throughout the entire course of Christian thought.

What next, we find ourselves asking, will the divine Preceptor select from Jesus’ words to bring to the notice of His waiting church?

## XVII

### PAX CHRISTI

*John 14:27. "Peace, I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you."*

NOT a very substantial contribution to the purse of an impoverished faith! If Jesus could have substituted power for peace and reënforced it by appeal to imperial arms, His words would have awakened instant confidence in the most timorous mind. If He had shown how His peace was an historic episode in the Pax Romana which Augustus proclaimed for the world, His prescience might have gained for Him a political prestige all out of proportion to His humble position in church and state. Again, had He been inclined to reason, as men of our time have done without being suspected of framing a Christian apologetic, that religion lies at the base of all civil and moral conduct, as well for the savage as for the æsthete, and that true religious growth can be obtained solely in the atmosphere of peace and concord, He would have arrayed Himself with the authoritative leaders of His own nation, and by the same stroke sped a shaft of gracious light into the chaotic philosophies beyond its pale. To assume either of these rôles would have been to enact the part of a master of affairs. But to utter the valedictory phrase familiar to His race, load it with personal implications, and distinguish it sharply in effectiveness from

the common usage of the street, is a sheer waste of effort as well as proof of the Speaker's mistaken estimate of Himself. The magic of a word is thwarted by the simple rehearsal of facts.

So much for the opinion of our shrewd and practical critic—some Philip who acknowledges no principle save that which can be demonstrated at once by a test case, a Loyola who harnessed the emotions and wills of men to a set of ironclad rules, an untutored son of Zebedee, who would brain the conceited disbelief of the world by a bolt of retribution—men of impatient temper, of white-heat action, to whom the searching of heart and the conning of ideas is offensive because futile, who see everything in the present and nothing in the uncharted future. To such men the farewell gift of Jesus was a taunt if not a gross insult. By the legerdemain of language it conjured up a state of mind which it had not the faintest hope of making real. Peace does not come by the execution of a repudiated reformer. Peace tarries, dumb and unseeing, for the converted Israelite who a generation later finds in the crumbling walls of the Holy City a sign of impending changes throughout the world. In face of criticism heard on every corner we ought to ask what Jesus meant by His cryptic sentence. If His benison was a promise of peace what is its nature, and how may it be conferred?

# I

The problem is not set for the first time in human thinking. On the surface of Greek inquiry the *via media* had been traced with the nicety of Aristotelian argument. The Stoics in later centuries had mastered

every resource for the settlement of similar questions. Far away among the brown men of India five hundred years before Jesus preached, an exact parallel was fixed between mental rest and the rippleless placidity of body. Peace as a problem is born with life, because interests here are not fixed but fluid. It will throw a flood of light upon the difficulties of the problem if we find out how men have actually defined this peace. I shall not attempt an exhaustive summary; but you will easily see that Paracelsus searching for a formula of gold is Lilliputian in stature compared with the genius who can fuse the rebellious elements of the moral world into an harmonious character.

The initial step has been to define peace in terms of things. That is due to the lingering childhood of our experience. Certain thinkers argue for the sovereignty of the physical senses. Others hope to reach a point where reflection can be conducted behind closed doors, in the executive chamber of the mind. It is not necessary for me to adjust the differences. Some who belong to the former group—the cruder sort—solve our problem at once by holding that peace is equivalent to ease. Now ease implies reaction upon environment. It can only be understood when shadowed by the presence of material goods. If, however, I have no property and decline to enter the shambles for it, I do not by that act convey myself beyond the field of stimulus. The Cynics imagined they did so by their brazen contempt for social values and their elaborate praise of virtue. But the poor man who spurns prosperity executes just as keen a response to wealth as the rich man. The peace realized by Antisthenes was only an easing off of the heavy burdens that his wealthy neighbor cheerfully assumed.



He negated the appeal of luxury and physical comfort, not understanding what a significant share they had in the development of the spiritual life. Is absence of responsibility as to goods the same as peace?

If not, we must examine the claims of the opposing theory. Can I find a perfect balance of mind within the confines of a sheltered palace? Burnished brass, pictured tapestry, the gleam of gilded lights, the scent of musk and roses, are not incompatible with serene reflection. Aurelius was garbed in purple and surrounded by every evidence of worldly pomp, but he was not a slave to imperious sense. His unflagging purpose made him the master of circumstance. Peace and ease may constitute a true equation. Nevertheless, the coefficient of the terms should be carefully noted. If not expressed it is understood.  $X$  equals  $Y$ , because  $Y$  has a coefficient which the mathematician has allowed to remain unstated. If peace and ease be identical the second term of the equation gets a meaning, only when you have thrown the mental temper of your subject into the situation which confronts him. Thus, Nero occupied precisely the same place in the Roman government as his philosophical successor. His life, however, took on an utterly different cast. Turmoil, hate, suspicion leading to the crime of matricide, involved and pestered him. Dis-temper that struck off discordant notes from an unwilling instrument while the city reddened with his caprice, grim cruelty that sneered in the faces of his suffering victims, made his imperial affluence a mockery. The coefficient may be suppressed, but its importance to the equation is admitted by all. If any man still insists that ease makes peace, let him consult the ease of the man of wealth. Nothing, unless it be

political power, will so surely heap upon a citizen the bitter recriminations of his neighbor. He may hold his head high and profess himself impervious to their insinuating words; but human nature never gets beyond the dread of personal injury. Private property, whether he knows it or not, puts a man in the attitude of defense, and what is that but the first act of war? Ease, in other words, is not the handmaiden of peace, but a kind of armed neutrality, whose superficial calm may be broken up by the slightest hint of opposition.

The problem before us resists solution when interpreted in terms of things. Suppose we change its form and seek an issue in personal relations. Submission, not ease, is the price of peace. Such a situation confronted the French people in 1870. The presumption and boastfulness of their ruler invited a clash with the powerful oligarchy of Prussia. Teutonic blood ran riot with the heat of revenge for the outrages of the first Napoleon. Without due military preparation, without cordial support from a people whose interests had long been the sport of changing governments, without competent leadership in the field, imperial caprice carried its armies to the ignoble defeats of Sedan and Gravelotte. Peace came by passing under the yoke. Rich and prosperous provinces were wrenched from organic union with the State. Citizens with French feeling and unswerving loyalty to French ideals became subject to an arrogant conqueror. Cathedrals that once resounded with the vibrant notes of Gallic worship caught up languorously and as with reluctant voice the harsher tones of an alien speech. Peace was restored. Was it peace in a universal sense? The embers of an ancient cry kindled into new flame at the magic touch of disaster. Out of the ashes of national

humiliation a modern France arose, seeking by rigorous training of mind a settlement of social difficulties, crying for relief from the tyranny of ecclesiastical dogmatism, developing a superb self-restraint that in even more trying circumstances would rouse its zeal to a defense of her municipal destiny.

Nor was this all. Submission could not quench the love for her sequestered soil. France could not and would not yield her age-long title to fields and cities which the fortunes of war had swept from her grasp. On the spacious square in Paris for forty years the statue of Strasbourg has lain draped in the sable folds of bereavement. While the towers of that city are lit by the glare of unsympathetic fires, French patriotism will never sink into acquiescence. Some day, they say, the tricolor ensign and the fleur-de-lis will flash from the Cathedral's solitary spire. Some day the ingenious clock in its nave will inaugurate its solemn procession of apostles and saints at the hour of twelve, in the presence of faces radiant with accomplished hope. Submission, reserved though it be, is not peace either for a nation or for a man. Whatever force of human contriving you or your neighbor may bow to for a time, if you are deeply conscious that such a force is wrongly imposed, neither you nor he can obtain perfect peace, until you have cut its unholy fetters in twain and stood upon your feet, men of inflexible purpose, tried in the furnace of affliction and not found wanting.

I approach a more subtle definition of peace. It may be applied under the rubric of social experience, or in the quiet haunts of private devotion. The severe morality of Puritanism was a brave attempt to realize its terms on the platform of national character.

In a more bewildering way the Brahmin mind sought to throw the cloak of philosophy over its theory of peace. To be absorbed in the Infinite is the primary wish of the soul. Peace in these historic instances is self-repression. The spirit of other worldliness pervades for a moment the fabric of society, but only for a moment; ultimately it will clash with the common ideas of statehood. Such imposing shibboleths as national destiny, economic pressure, military preparedness, prove how strangely out of place the ghost of self-effacement would find itself in the world of moil and toil today. This unresting ambition, this endeavor after superiority, this suspicion of motives and mistrust of deed argue not for restrained impulse but for an assertion of personal might.

Now at base the satisfaction of desire is a correct religious program. If the complexity of modern relations has done nothing else, it has shaken religion out of her isolated complacency, and made her offices a part of the necessary activities of human life. Religion is the divine instrument for the complete development of personality. Thomas à Kempis is not an authoritative guide for the seeker after truth. "If thou attain to the full contempt of thyself," he says, "know that thou shalt then enjoy abundance of peace, as great as this state of pilgrimage can afford." But why should I hold in disesteem the agility of limb, the quick perception of eye, the readiness of mind to grapple with the unexplored reserves of science? By a strict sequence of logic I should be forced to deny my right to entertain affection for Deity or repose faith in His simplest commands. Self-repression would end in spiritual defeat. If, however, we are to secure independence for the mind, must we not reduce its

contact with external interests to a minimum? "How can he long abide in peace," exclaims the cloistered writer, "who trusts himself to the cares of others, who seeks occasion abroad, who little or seldom recollects himself within his own breast?" Thomas was not a psychologist; with his limited study of the tangled system of impulses under which we live and move and have our being, he did not understand that men cannot thrive on the bread of private meditation; they demand the quick neural sympathies of the outside world. They have eyes, and their vision will mirror the gorgeous beauty of leaf and landscape. They have ears, and without effort they convert the sounds of forest and valley—the hum of insect and the neigh of distant horses—into the melodic tones of ballad or nocturne. They have an irresistible aptitude for love, and out of an unbarred soul rushes forth a tumultuous flood of passion upon one of its kind. It is a mistake, I say, to define man's peace as forgetfulness of the embrace of others. The peace of a mother is her stern abandon of self for her child. The peace of a statesman is not a calculated compromise whereby both factions in the nation glimpse a shallow prosperity. Repression of native instinct, the obliteration of æsthetic values, is a vain road to peace. No, Simon Stylites, you have failed to win a spiritual conquest by your silent posture on the column. The nerve of action is stilled, the common habits of men are declined. You have changed your body into a monument, but the secret will which dominates lust and faith you have not conquered. Peace stands a trembling stranger at your side. No, Jacob Boehme, winsome as your mystic reveries seem, crave though we may for unmoored absorption in the divine love,



still neither you nor we, your generation nor ours, may seek release from the neighbor duties, which pain and hate and the thousand vices of society have but served to make more urgent. Peace is not there; for no conflict is quite so keen as that which rages in the breast of a man whose hand has deliberately closed the gate of help to a brother in need.

## II

What is the peace of Christ? It cannot be defined by ease or submission or repression, for each of these is absent from His life. He never surrounded Himself with the awards of social success. On the other hand, He could truthfully say that the Son of man had nowhere to lay His head. He defied the exactions of caste in church and state. He could yield His body to be slain, but He would never permit His soul to be stained by the most trivial concession to error. Finally, He stood forth in the pride of manhood, in the consciousness of an unquestioned Sonship; He did not need the asceticism of a Baptist to expound the full glory of His character. If Jesus possessed a peace which overleaped any definitions of His day, what, we ask again, were its terms?

First I think we must describe it as perfect balance. The balance I have in mind is not the immovability of the steel-yards. You have seen the Greek image of Justice—scales evenly poised, not a grain too much in either pan, not a movement up or down of either arm. Peace, another name for justice, finds its competent symbol here. But the poise of spirit which Jesus had was not static; it was the secretion of a nerve-driven organism. I can picture it as the pose



of the eagle, soaring above the crash of tempest, holding itself still with its eye to the sun, every muscle taut, every member strained—in perfect command of its salient powers. I can liken peace to the restraint of a battle-charger, restive in face of smoking cannon, eyes alert and nostrils distended, waiting the word of command for the final plunge. Into the concentrated composure of the moment enter the training of generations and the past experiences of triumph.

Peace is the balance of private forces. It came to no more solemn issue in the career of Jesus than when He stood calm and self-possessed before the Tribunal of the Governor. Men sometimes take their peace from the flinching gesture of their opponent. The searching gaze of Jesus read clearly the craven impulses which shaded in gray lines the visage of His judge. But His own serenity was independent. If He had been tried at the bar of an implacable Draco His bearing would have been unchanged. The purpose of His mission in the world, the triumphant vindication of His personal power, the defeat of malignant insinuations by priest and elder, the conviction that spiritual issues are never determined by physical instrumentalities, the apocalyptic look into the future—a world aglow with moral beauty, character transformed, states recreated, social habits fibered by a new sense of justice, literature no longer debased by immoral conceits but redolent of holy passion, Beatrice the emblem of unsoiled affection, Lancelot the champion of righteous motives—such facts and images conspired to frame the peace of Jesus, as He stood undaunted before Rome's scepter. For why should the rage of Jewish accusers disturb His mind? How could the vulgar

expressions of contempt by coarse and blood-stained soldiers swerve Him from the goal? Would He break the granite firmness of His decision by a momentary display of temper under the scorpion lash of Pilate's scorn? The king does not change countenance when his courtiers threaten or his guards rebel. Jesus' peace was not sensitive to the temperatures of opinion. He knew what was in man, and He knew what was in Himself. Sure of His own purpose He let His judges work out their inevitable end.

The peace of Jesus again was the peace of action. It is a gross misjudgment of His language to make Him the original advocate of passive resistance. You do not read His words in that sense, and certainly I should be a feeble interpreter of His career if I classified His reserve before the brutal jests of His tormentors as the abject surrender of selfhood. That such reserve must have a wide space in our estimate of Jesus I am willing to admit. But reserve in such a case is not inaction, it is the highest form of action. It asserts the hegemony of spiritual powers over the seductions of sense. The savage chief, the cultured sage, under stress of momentary need can strike back by hand or bitter word. Even the fledgling in its nest acts upon the thrill of organic resentment. Only a chastened soul is able to refrain, because it alone has learned what the experience of history has vainly striven to teach—that retaliation in kind is abortive. It is not true action, it is the heedless repeating of another's act, a sort of blind imitation driving straight across the total meaning of life. That is to say, the injured party shall in all reason do nothing else but turn the other cheek; for by so doing he introduces a new mode of action altogether beyond the calculation of

brute instinct, and pronounces the doom of martial might.

Peace, in other words, is not the organ of passion. Spinoza, who as few men of his time felt the sting of venomous aspersion, construes the impressions of sense as having no logical coördination. The eye, the ear, the touch, carry their images pell-mell into the brain, and that which yields the greatest toll of fleshly gratification gets our quickest response. But a conflict is unavoidable; the stronger is pitted against the weaker, the nearer against the remoter, the grosser against the more refined. Man is in a maelstrom of war, so long as untamed impulse rules his life. To silence the debate, Spinoza proposes that we undertake to find out just how the mind receives its impressions and how each kind is related to the purpose, which as human beings we are bound to pursue. We must make our ideas *clear*; we must be agents, not re-agents, men of action and not the sport of every wind of chance. By a process so severe, impulse turns into reason, chaos into order, sanguinary warfare into the benisons of peace.

If you would sight the contrast peer for a moment into the face of Simon Peter as he stands by the porter's fire, and then study the demeanor of his Master before the court. Peter is the vortex of contrary emotions. In the first place the instinct of curiosity had thrust him into the danger-zone. If he had consulted the claims of common prudence he would have remained in hiding with his affrighted comrades. Secondly, he was astonished at being recognized as an accomplice of the Prisoner. But suspense at once gave way to fear, which had not even the presence of supporting friends for its relief. Fear brought forth

vehement denials—words of dishonesty, words of treachery, words of moral defeat. Then two things happened, the cock crew and Jesus looked at Peter. A lifetime of emotional conflict was crowded into a few seconds. Men sometimes *find* themselves under the thrust of a mighty temptation. They have been spiritual infants before, with no warrant for assuming the rights of moral manhood. Now they step out into the glorious sunlight of self-consciousness. They are no longer led, they lead. The change from passion to action we call conversion. Jesus called it by that name, and counseled the converted man to strengthen his brethren. I maintain that conversion is not a calculated surrender of will to a superior power. The medieval saint has blundered. Paradox though it be, conflict is always the spawn of surrender. The Christian never surrenders—even to God. He identifies his thought with the beauty and assurance of heaven, and thereby attains his spiritual majority. Unlike the hero of antiquity he demands no meritricious defense but stands upon his own feet and defies the most ingratiating Sirens of sense. He is in complete control of his resources; he is at peace with himself. Peace other than this is war. Where lies, we ask, the sovereign contrast between the disciple and his Lord? Just at the point, and there only, where judgment unhands forever the self-effacing grip of passion.

Peace once more is correlate with purpose. A peace which settles like a pall upon exhausted warriors can be nothing other than the peace of death. If for Christ peace meant solely the hush of clamorous cries in the dark silence of Calvary, we may read there the syllables of private purpose attained, the pangs of jealousy sated, but we cannot disentangle the subtler

notes which pass beyond the borders of physical change and seize upon the essential character of soul. Death gives peace, the cessation of warfare; it yields no answer to the fervent hopes for which men have steeped their hands and bodies in blood. Blood is the price, it is not the object we seek. Peace which the shedding of blood at length forces upon the world is ephemeral and without content—a phosphorescent glow, except as its light is polarized by a mighty purpose. What is the purpose of peace?

“Peace with honor” is the first watchword on the lips of aggressive patriotism. So long as the honor of the nation is in danger there can be no peace. Many questions are susceptible of adjustment by the principle of give-and-take. Property rights, boundary lines, the equalization of economic opportunities are justiciable matters, which no people in the light of international law should decline to submit to a proper court of arbitration. But questions that affect the sovereignty of government, my right, my country’s right to live, are beyond the pale of adjudication; they belong to private honor and shall be maintained at a cost of life and treasure. Peace which does not guarantee my self’s integrity is not peace but contemptible surrender.

Let us test this creed by the conduct of Jesus. To maintain one’s honor one must resent by word and act every slur upon the good name one bears, call the offender to account and visit upon him appropriate punishment. Cicero charges the disciples of Epicurus with cashiering the heroic virtues of Greece; they were content with the ease of æsthetic indifference; the word Honor had dropped from their vocabulary. But does honor always imply the vindication of per-



sonal rights, the safeguarding of personal goods? If it does, the life of Jesus is pitiably lacking. Peace with honor could have been secured by an adroit compromise. He could have agreed to retract His invectives against a decadent church and accept the temporal headship of its rulers. Men and nations have adopted such articles of agreement, and history has applauded their course. Did Jesus seek so simple an issue? John the Baptist fell in with it, and he was only beguiled from his policy of live-and-let-live by the cunning of an insatiate royal vanity. To the man of Nazareth peace with honor represented a mere lull in the campaign against wrong; it might be a "truce of God"; but a truce is a breathing spell preliminary to the resumption of hostilities on a more massive scale.

Perhaps we may change the slogan—not peace with honor but peace with justice is the summary of our creed. Certainly we are nearer now to the purpose of the Lord. His soul was heavy with the burdens of a people. Political servitude, economic pressure, the pain of disease, the greed and cruelty of men weighed upon Him as upon the anguished heart of a Mazzini. He could not rest while children were deprived of their birthright, women stripped of their goods by due process of law, and hungry men went without the common means of sustenance. If Christ had chosen, He could have been an imposing social reformer, He might even have raised an insurrection against the court of Rome. Then, as now, the quest for justice invited eager souls to a desideratum, whose terms have touched the lyre of many a bard and awakened the hopes of sanguine moralists. But one difficulty is always at hand. Jesus knew it. Statesmen the world over have been unable to escape its admonition. The



highest moral attribute ascribed to God by Old Testament saints becomes inadequate in face of experience. Does justice abide? Is its form forever fixed? The most generous treatment of Greek ethics can do no more than to make it an ideal, standing at the end of an infinite series of single just acts, each of which is conspicuous for what it lacks rather than for what it has. The fact is that justice is never the same; it changes with soil and age. It cries out in alarm when a fair land is desecrated by the hand of a murderous enemy. It is silent before the ordinary thrusts of poverty. If yon rushing motor sweeps a child to his death the law takes notice in the course of time, and hales the culprit before the court—in many cases, however, only to exonerate him on the ground of the child's heedlessness. But what sort of justice is executed for the multitudes of children whose lifeblood is slowly sapped, whose morals are cramped, whose holy affections are crushed by the inveterate lust for gold on the part of pitiless employers? Peace with justice is a noble watchword; yet in the world of finite susceptibilities I do not see how you can adjust the wide differences of opinion to the certain attainment of right.

If justice fails as the fulcrum of peace must we give up the case in despair? We should be tempted to do so, were we confined to the oracles of the prophets. They saw the futility of their own panaceas. But divine reason is not exhausted. It will set a last goal at whose stake the coveted prize is won. Peace with Love is the symbol of the new covenant. It is emblazoned on the wintry sky and heralded in the angels' song. Peace comes to earth in the vehicle of good will. There is no peace that has not penetrated

deep into the mysteries of spiritual companionship. The peace of the Christian home never raises the question of justice. Each new problem is solved on the basis of common interest, which is love. The peace of the church—where there is any—is never a delicate balance of antithetical forces; it is a mutual understanding of duty and hope. The peace of neighbors is in many cases so crude and remote a thing, simply because men find it extremely difficult to get the other and conflicting point of view. They have no sympathies beyond the narrow precincts of family and business. The peace of science is sometimes compelling; it excites the remark of the uninitiated world, which fails to perceive her unswerving devotion to the principles of truth. Shall peace between nations be built on a foundation less secure? What can make the Japanese people the sworn friends of this Republic, except a resolute endeavor on our part, seconded by theirs, to examine and sympathetically to appraise every private ideal and public aim? The spirit of Christ's peace is the spirit of intelligent regard, at work among citizens, at work among states. Love that begets concord must comprehend. Instinctive love does not heal, it divides. I suspect that Paul would have given his right hand, could he have stricken from the record the story of his disagreement with Barnabas. He did not understand the older man's insight into the vacillating temper of John Mark. I suspect, too, that if France and Germany could see into one another's heart, forgetting the bitter past and remembering only the common elements of culture in art and science, in philosophy and statecraft, even in the sacred offices of religion, where they differ only in form—they could begin to kindle the first tiny flame of

sympathy, whose increasing glow would be an immeasurable boon to the civilization of the world. Peace, the peace of Christ, can only come when reserve has given place to acquaintance, and suspicion to the open mind of respect.

## III

The final query is thus upon us, "How shall peace be won?" It is clear that Jesus definitely rejects the method tried by men—"Not as the world giveth." Peace is not a trophy of the unsheathed sword. No question of right and wrong has found its safe adjustment on the bloody field. It may be thrown into eclipse for a moment; the circumstances that evoked it may be obscured in the smoke of battle or in the delusive haze of death, but eventually it will awake again to consciousness, to new and more poignant dread, in the realization of how much men have suffered and for what meager returns. High-strung orators and adroit special pleaders have assured us that peace bought by war means the ordering of a stronger manhood, an official culture, a more coherent social fabric and a higher regard for law. Unquestionably such effects follow. Do they follow alone from the fiery discipline of war? Is there nothing in the industries of peace that works out the same character? Is not war a critic rather than a builder? Does it not stalk through men's streets and nature's shady lanes with the grim intent of exposing shams and teaching the shallowness of ordinary aims by a subtle stroke and not by the long tutelage of evolution? If courage be needed can you find its solitary expression in the arm that strikes? If individual initiative be soothed into repose by the monotony of life, shall we seek its

fresh vigor under the flash of guns and in the martial tread of a million soldiers? If you would induce men to put away petty dissensions and unite in common effort, must you wait for the enemy at your gates, the Zeppelin above your darkened cities or the unseen foe beneath your vessel's keel? These strictly human qualities are not fed by the instincts of the brute; for war is the resort of crude, uncritical impulse. The peace which Rome imposed on Europe was not at base a triumph of arms. War shattered the flimsy structures of primitive society. Law entered to organize its desperate units into a strong and self-acting community. The principle is eternally true—you cannot control the mind of men by the show of force. Every League to Enforce Peace bears the seeds of its own decay. As a temporary device it may be valuable, but as the guardian of international concord it is doomed to ignominious failure.

Nor is peace determined by diplomacy. Ever since the Congress of Berlin portioned out the sands and jungles of helpless Africa to the earth-hungry nations of Europe, and appointed spheres of influence for their activity, conferences for the settlement of disputed questions have been the order of the day. The Hague Courts went so far as to submit to peaceful argument the manner of making war. Dramatic situations like these call into play the legal erudition, the historical knowledge, the elements of prudence, but above all a nation's skill in outwitting its opponents in the clever stating of its particular point of view. Every diplomatic pronouncement is a balance of strictly opposed interests and may be interpreted to suit the needs of the signatory Power. Peace suspended by so slender a thread is a Damoclean sword;

its keen blade will cut to pieces the man or body of men who elect to disturb its equilibrium. Peace won by strategy is a patched peace. It does not throb through the arteries of social life with vitalizing power. It does not quench, it restrains momentarily the liquid fires of resentment. It does not cure, it covers the living sore with a membrane of temporary reserve. The success of Russia's art in the Peace of Portsmouth in snatching the fruits of victory from her financially exhausted foe will never be forgotten by Japan. Some day the hand of revenge will grip the saber; some day the little men of the East will rise in the fury of accumulated passion to erase from their national ensign the stain of a diplomatic defeat. It is vain to expect perpetual concord from the devices of a human court. The world's way of settling differences has been so often discounted by the event that we need not stop to debate its validity. Suffice it to say that Christ has no place for compromise in His scheme for making peace. You must either be against Him or on His side.

But let us not stop with a joint agreement, let us write the agreement into a treaty. Men are tempted to evade the law which has never been formally enunciated; but they cannot deny the truth of a principle, when once it has found solid expression in the nation's code. The American Constitution is a case in point. It is a treaty between citizens. It is a confession that a group of intelligent and aggressive men are free to pursue their individual occupations with safety and success, only after the rights of intercourse have been carefully determined. Hence that important paper is the instrument of peace, the anchor of our liberties, the guaranty of progress. But is it beyond the reach of revision? Can its authority be challenged? For



four years a great group of states declined to accept a particular interpretation of its terms. They were forced by arms to submit, but in their submission they established the significant principle that the Constitution is big enough to care for the interests of a widely diversified national character. The most sacred agreements have been bent to the sway of passion or reason. Treaties represent a temporary need. They may be denounced to serve the humanitarian purposes of the original makers. They are at times arbitrarily dissolved, in order to steal a march on a menacing rival. They embody a *status quo*, a situation made possible by the bargain of certain nations and terminated by one or both at discretion. If peace be conditioned upon such a fact, it is easy to see why Jesus would reject the terms as utterly inadequate.

What, then, can suffice? How does divine peace secure its place in the councils of earth? I answer, the peace of Christ comes alone by growth. It is not by compact, not by revolution, but by the slow unfolding of moral excellence that peace takes its seat among men. Scientific fancy has led our conceits backward through the mazes of geologic history, and disclosed the struggle through which Life has passed on its way to a complete expression in the reflective mind of man. Students of civil history delight to point out the awakening of the spirit of altruism in the chancellories of the world, which occasional lapses into barbarism cannot wholly quench. It is harder to make war now than ever before. In view of the rupture of 1914 many readers may challenge this proposition. It is not self-evident, I admit, but an array of arguments stand in its favor. I cite but two. War does not break now so readily because science has put



in the hands of the soldier the deadliest weapons he has ever wielded. Greek fire and the gatling-gun are primitive as compared with the asphyxiating gas and 42-centimeter guns of present struggle. Again, war can no longer be declared without rendering to the public opinion of the world a strict account for the action. Moral sentiment has a profounder influence upon national enterprise than it had in the days of Napoleon. Red Books, White Books, Orange Books, were not issued a hundred years ago. The conscience of the world today is more acute and demands for every act of war a summary explanation. Such a fact can be interpreted in one way alone—men have marched through wars to a real love of peace. Peace is not sought in dramatic statement, but in the steady cultivation of a brotherly feeling.

But the sentiment for civil concord is part of a greater movement. The spirit of man is being changed. The sacrificial program which satisfied Abraham would be horribly repugnant to us. Men do not kill their children in cold blood today, though men break one another's hearts. I am at a loss to discover any difference. In some respects the latter form of injury is more painful, because so subtle. In outward form at any rate the change is for the better. We are not concerned at the moment in showing that men have actually secured progress. We maintain the principle of growth as the sole means for grasping the ideal elements of peace. It looks as though Jesus gave instant proprietary rights to His disciples when it is said, "He breathed on them and said, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." The gift is sure, the appropriation slow.

You ask me why the church has failed to get His peace, and I answer, because peace comes by the proc-

ess of moral development. If you think that Christ will present a superb example of moral firmness, before the spirit of peace has had time to work on the earth, you will find yourself mistaken. Life is double—it appears in the individual, it appears in the species; but it is always life struggling for wider powers. Life is just as complete in the lowest organism as in man, but its capabilities are for the most part sterilized in the one. Peace has been here since Jesus lived. It could not command universal acceptance at first. It must win assent by slow and painful stages. Today peace of mind is a sweeter, more gracious property than human experience has ever found it. The world has been growing into a character in which peace may be fittingly enshrined. For this reason we are bound to say that peace, not war, is the normal order of manhood. The savage is superseded by the intelligent thinker, the warrior by the apostle of culture.

## XVIII

### THE CREED OF THE CROSS

*John 14:29. "And now I have told you before it come to pass, that when it is come to pass ye might believe."*

THESE words are heavy with meaning. Their very indefiniteness lingers with impressive accents in the memory. Something unwanted threatens to shatter the peace of the charmed circle. Can its nature be divined? The manner of Jesus intimates that the event, whatever its terms, carries with it consequences of grave import. "Before it come to pass." Two events only in His historic career deserve a prelude so solemn as this. Is He preparing their belief in natural law for the unexpected return of His spirit to its fleshly home? Certainly an exercise of faith beyond the common were required for that. But such faith made after all an appeal to sense. Thomas *saw* his Lord and believed.

The other event was prior to the resurrection and its necessary hinge. Faith in the crucifixion is not a matter of verifying the physical fact. The evidence of death is clear from the scientific data which John collected and preserved, as though to disarm the Docetic heresy of a later century. Faith deals with the meaning of the fact, the values which truth imposes upon it. Since criticism, except in extreme cases like the theorizing of Arthur Drews, has never denied the ex-

press fact of the cross, faith has no need to pave its way by a citation of empirical details. Faith approaches the facts at a bound. It is an intuition, not an argument. Faith like this is in the present, it is not concerned with futurities. Therefore, it is the Lord's duty so to fashion the mental attitude of his disciples that when the storm breaks they will not weather its momentary fury, but catch up the determining principle which the cross reveals for the satisfaction of human hopes. Many a student today needs to have his mind calmed by a prophetic word, ere he sits down to the task of understanding Calvary. It evinces Jesus' insight into common character that He guarantees now as then the tenor of the new faith by a hint as to the inevitableness of its object.

The cross having obtained a place in the chronicles of the world, what meaning shall we attach to its terms? In the Scripture's account the creed of the cross is salvation. How does the cross save?

## I

*The cross by its own token cannot save.* It is one of the foibles of the human mind to ascribe a peculiar power to material things. Perhaps this pebble was in my pocket when a piece of good fortune came to me. Immediately it becomes a treasure, and all kinds of future favors await its touch. Poetry has imbedded this feeling in the heart of her fairest creations. Thus the sword of King Arthur is tempered to such Damascene strength that with it you can cleave the forest oak to its pith, and neither snap nor bend it. Religion has employed the same impulse to advantage. The tree beneath which Buddha sat possesses a vitality so

rich and abounding, that when its shoots are planted in alien soil they will survive the blight of ages and today yield refreshing shade to the weary traveler. That Christianity by the sheer beauty of its teachings would escape a similar treatment was too much to expect. Superstition, sometimes in grossly sensuous forms, has kept pace with her more spiritual attainments. Helena, Empress of Byzantium, is reputed to have found in the Holy City pieces of the historic cross. To preserve them with veneration as the implements of the Lord's suffering, would not be an act out of keeping with the temper of the faith. But human credulity does not stop there. It conceived the beams as charged with magical power and capable of exerting an influence quite different from the magnetic currents of nature. Now fancy links itself at once with the nearest desire, and the first desire is the cure of pain. It follows soon that the cross becomes the symbol of medicinal virtue. Let a man touch its surface, and leprosy was removed, lameness cured, vagaries of mind banished, and the integrity of the body renewed. Scientific education and the critical exposure of so-called "cures" at Lourdes and St. Anne de Beau Pré have not freed certain types of mind from the tyranny of the foibles they love.

It is not our business to trace the origin of religious superstition. Psychology can do that with a bewildering variety of detail. That new science is religion's consort in the quest for truth. What we seek to do is to crush humanity's regard for symbols, when they have worked their way insidiously into the sanctuary of truth. We hold that every element which Christian affection has treasured with reverence is of value only in so far as we are able to read in it the evidences of

eternal truth. It should not injure the faith of the humblest saint to know that extreme unction poured upon the dying brow cannot in the slightest degree affect the future destiny of the soul. It is the sign, not the thing signified. By the same token the waters of baptism are wholly devoid of spiritual power. To argue that by sprinkling a few drops on the infant's head you can implant the germs of right living is to erect sensuous matter into the guardian of the mind. Nor can similar claim be made for the sacred office of the Communion. The elements are physical and always remain so. Priestly blessing and ecclesiastical tradition are helpless to change their form. To withhold the cup from the laity lest in its service the blood of Christ should be accidentally spilled is a crude relapse into the fetichism of primitive society. To think of the real body of Christ as co-existng with the material loaf is a tax upon the patience rather than upon the credulity of the worshipper. In fact, any attempt to put a piece of earth into the place reserved for spiritual values is a mockery and a sham. If the cross has inherent power to save, it did not need the person of Jesus to magnetize its form. The cross of the penitent thief would do as much. If the cross as such be essential to salvation, then you have confessed that if Jesus had died by the Roman sword His death would have been robbed of its beneficial offices. The hope of the world is transferred from the dying Lord to the crude instrument by which He met His death.

## II

*The cross as the instrument of law cannot save.*  
The Evangelists are in no doubt as to what the Jews



intended. To them the cross of Jesus marked the end of a career of dishonor. Let us admit that the Mosaic law was a compendium of the civil and religious life of Israel. Its place in the Canon made it the source of authority for every succeeding book. History was a dramatic application of its primary precepts. The sacred poems carried its terms into the spiritual achievements of the race. Prophetic elation was faulty and vain, except as it embodied the ideals of the traditional religion. Hence the scribe became the responsible teacher of the nation. To him was granted the right to construe the hard sayings of the law, so as to suit the current needs. For this reason Talmud and Targum assumed in the course of time an importance far beyond their intrinsic worth. The spell of the law passed upon them much in the way that the authority of Aquinas infected the dogmas of the medieval church.

To criticize, to dispute, to defy the smallest of its injunctions was an act of sin, and "the soul that sinneth it shall die." It is this sin of criticism that priest and elder charged against Jesus. They resented His treatment of their past. What right, they asked, had this Galilean to reorganize the basic interests of the law? Had not Moses said, "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth"? and shall this modern reader annul a fundamental statute by the counsel of non-resistance? They resented, too, His undisguised tone of contempt for their religious practices. Wise and discriminating jurists had specialized the statute governing the Sabbath so as to forbid the bearing of burdens on the Holy Day. Yet Jesus not only violated its sanctity by a dramatic cure but dragged His beneficiary into sin by commanding him to carry away his bed. They resented His attitude towards their vener-

ated shrine. If forty years were consumed in erecting the pinnacles of the Temple, could the unaided genius of an amateur reconstruct them within three days? They despised and ridiculed His claims to Messianic virtue. To be sure, the excited populous exclaimed, "When Christ cometh, shall he do more miracles?" But uninstructed minds are swayed by the emotions of momentary wonder. The real denial of His claims was fixed by an appeal to Scripture. Jesus could not be the expected Messiah, for the facts of His life were wrong. Bethlehem, not Nazareth, is the birthplace of the nation's Saviour. With bitter words and angry gestures they resented His assumption of superhuman honors. Before the high priest's court He destroyed with a word the first article in the Jewish creed, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," for He made Himself equal to God. Finally, they resented His short method with the spiritual authorities of the day. He handled them without gloves, exposed their insincerities, denounced their treatment of the poor, held up to ridicule their fringed garments and sanctimonious airs, pointed the finger of scorn at the pagantry of prayer, and adding insult to injury, justified the broken cry of the Publican over against the systematic self-complacency of the Pharisee. Since teacher and law in the eyes of the Jews were one and the same, every criticism of the former was a deliberate defiance of the latter. Jesus was undoubtedly guilty.

But Jesus did not stand alone. His guilt was one of solidarity. In His sin He carried with Him the offense of His entire generation. "This people is accursed, because they know not the law." In the secret queries of groping faith many an Israelite was just as culpable as He. John the Baptist vocalized their re-

volt in his impassioned sermons by the Jordan. The religious leaders were aware of the volcanic pit yawning before them. They were bound hand and foot in political matters by the decree of Rome. They were fighting now to retain their hold on the spiritual habits of Judea. Time had made them, they felt, the chosen depositories of religion. To them as infallibly as to the papal throne had been committed the oracles of revelation. If they could not maintain the sanctity of law, who could? If vengeance fell not on the violators of its sacred precepts, how could the faith which meant safety to the race ever be preserved from extinction?

Therefore, animated by zeal for the law and a desire to take personal revenge, they determined to make an example. Religion utters its sharpest protests when it requires one man, a self-confessed leader, to pay the penalty for public skepticism. "It is expedient," exclaims the pious Caiaphas, "that one should die for the people." That is to say, the majesty of the law does not exact a wholesale slaughter of offenders. In that way you might deprive innocent men of their lives. Here and there you might kill some who could be restored to loyalty by intimidation or an appeal to self-interest. Law is symbolic in its intent and its sanctions. Just as social sovereignty may be construed as reposing in responsible rulers, so offenses against its will may be gathered up and laid upon the shoulders of a single eminent transgressor. The principle of representation is to be invoked to cover the insurrectionary attitude of the people towards their religious governors.

So much for the historic opinion of the Sanhedrin. We could dismiss the situation as a case of professional pique or misjudged zeal, if the principle of symbolic

punishment had not been seized upon by a master-mind of the seventeenth century to explain the meaning of the cross. Hugo Grotius was a man of remarkable legal talents. His genius was analytic, and at the same time constructive. It was he who framed the first conceits of international jurisprudence. He argued that if a legal code based on moral right could guide the conduct of the community, it is absurd not to apply the same principles to the exchange of ideas as between states. Then under the influence of his theological studies he swept over the barriers that separate the finite and Infinite, and organized a social relationship between God and man. Here as in the civil state if law be violated some device must be found for its vindication. The value of punishment lies often in the warning it gives to offenders. It tells men what to expect if certain crimes are committed. But the state itself will be in serious danger of destruction, if all who are culpable under its law should be held in duress. It is therefore advisable to vindicate the majesty of justice by laying the burden upon a single individual. Let us choose not a commonplace misdeed such as Barabbas but the Lord of Glory Himself, who voluntarily assumes the burden. He knows no sin in His own person, but in His own person can include the woes of humanity, inasmuch as He is by distinction the First Man; and bearing the effects of their sin He can prove the inexorableness of law in the divine order of the world.

Such is the argument. Can we accept it? Common sense sees at least three fatal implications. First, Jesus is without share in the sins of humanity; secondly, before the law no man can assume the guilt of another; thirdly, stern punishment in one case

does not actually warn off future transgressions in the same field. Let me give an example. In 1905 the Spanish government apprehended a group of reputed anarchists who were accused of plotting against the state. They were tried and found guilty. It was thought that the execution of so large a group might create a feeling dangerous to the security of the throne. Accordingly they determined to make an example by choosing for death its most distinguished member, Professor Ferrer of the University of Madrid. The day of execution arrived. Upon the Plaza the undaunted leader was brought out to suffer for his kind. Before him stood the six guardsmen detailed to fire the fatal shot. The signal was given, the report heard, and the body pierced by the unerring bullets fell lifeless upon the pavement. Justice in Spain is avenged and the threatened anarchy removed.

Is the conclusion valid? Does death at the executioner's hand reaffirm the sanctity of law? Can the moral order of the world be reorganized and kindled to new vigor by the sacrifice of any, even its best? Do we not import a crude and unspiritual view of law into the purposes of God, when we ascribe a "governmental" office to the atonement of Christ? Questions such as these brush away the spell which ingenious dialectics have spun about the Grotian theory. They reveal the artificial character of the scheme. It may suffice for a momentary need in harassed states, but it does not provide the elements of truth which will explain the beauty and the serene hopefulness of Jesus' life or the unflinching firmness of His death.



## III

*The cross as an example of fidelity cannot save.* It is an accepted fact that loyalty as a spiritual principle finds its expression in every human relation. Family, race, nation, are common fields for the play of its vigorous forces. Study the simple forms of association in the early clan and compare them with the bewildering coördinations of executive government in a Republic. What can explain the subtle cohesion of the group? The answer is found in the fact we are discussing. The obedience of a tribe to its chief, the service of a class to its masters, the respect of subjects for the majesty of the king, the response of democratic societies to the sense of law—these are historic samples of loyal feeling. Yonder on the battlefield you will find a million breathing units distinct in type of mind and in personal experience, but deliberately sensible of one patriotic impulse. Men face the shrieking shrapnel, huddle for days in water-soaked trenches, pierce the ominous splendor of the clouds, submerge themselves beneath menacing waves, all for the purpose of bodying forth the same loyal sentiment. Nor is the sacrifice of war alone on the field of carnage. In hospitals and tents women are standing by maimed and bleeding bodies, administering the restorative draught, applying the healing bandage; and far away in obscure village or town mothers and sweethearts with quivering anxiety await the sound of feet which shall never again return. They murmur not, nor repine. For the safety of the country, the land of birth and honor, they will yield all they have, all they hold dearest. Loyalty is inextinguishable in the breast of humanity. Loyalty is the key to action.



Yet granted the virtue of the principle as an individual impulse, may we venture to affirm it as a universal social force? I do not forget that the Spartan youth was goaded to courage by the sight of his intrepid comrade. Nor can I overlook the pedagogic fact, used with notable results by the teachers of the Jesuit order, that emulation is an effective measure for driving the indifferent scholar to his task. I am not unmindful of historic scenes when the passion of Stephen eats its way into the bigoted conscience of Saul, when Ignatius turns from the flaming pyre of Polycarp's martyrdom, a determined advocate of Gospel truth. Still, I ask, can fidelity to principle give pledge of a sure return in the character and number of its followers? Socrates bows to the will of the Athenian Senate and amid the shadows of departing day, envired by his weeping friends, drinks the cup of hemlock rather than deny the intellectual liberty which opens man's path to the attainment of truth. Did many at once leave home and business to seek the same heroic death as his? Is it not engrossed on the scroll of history that the man of reform is the most solitary citizen in the world? Is it not the fear of social ostracism or a native conservatism clinging to ancient idols or commonplace stupidity which cannot entertain the idea of perfected justice in city and nation, that leaves the man of vision without a comrade in his fearless challenge of iniquity? Under certain circumstances loyalty issues her call in vain.

But you turn about and say, The witness of the cross was different from this. Jesus died, because He stood for a reorganization of social habits upon the basis of honesty. I do not hesitate to subscribe to the view that He was a stern and insistent critic of the irregularities

of social life. He was far more radical than John the Baptist, who merely advised the correction of abuses. Jesus demanded a new scheme of economics with which it would be impossible for a man to take advantage of his neighbor. To preach the doctrine He had to fly in the face of hostile vested interests. He had no fear but He paid for His zeal by the cross. Did His fellow-countrymen rally to the support of the new creed? A beggarly number—120—supported the cause in Jerusalem, and few if any of them came from the Blue Book of the city. Five hundred others sequestered among the hills of Galilee testified silently to a loyalty they dared not confess. The fate of Jesus is the familiar lot of moral crusaders. You must strike a higher note than mere example, if you expect the world to bate its breath and listen. Did Italy listen when Savonarola hurled his anathemas against the corruption of the Florentine city? If you pit the Medici against the monk which would eventually triumph? The blazing stake and the ashes of the martyr are history's answer to the query. A much more subtle answer was the unemancipated mind of the Italian people, which might have fared forth to talented deeds, rivaling the worth of Petrarch and Dante, but which deliberately shut its gates to honor and progress, till Mazzini, Cavour, and Garibaldi spoke. An ethical program cannot elicit the enthusiastic suffrages of mankind.

The argument swings in another direction. Let us grant that dramatic loyalty is not an invincible lure and may fail at the cross as well as by the cup of hemlock. Nevertheless, we have not exhausted the specifications of the case. It is agreed that the Sufferer has connections which differentiate Him from the

mass of men. He is more than human, He is divine, in what sense need not here be defined. If He be divine His death carries with it an organic power inaccessible to the finest act of human devotion. It belongs to the class of facts summed up in

"The one far off divine event  
To which the whole creation moves,"

and for which failure is in the nature of the case impossible. Movements issuing from the skill and interests of men are doomed to extinction, as witness schools of philosophy and systems of government. But the moral energy of the cross cannot evaporate in the haze of an impersonal drama. If Jesus died as the organ of divine power He will compel attention. We shall follow instinctively in His train, because we share the coercion of supernatural purpose, of which the death of Christ is one necessary link. We are drawn to the cross as irresistibly as the needle to the pole. The essence of abstract choice is lost. To look at Him who dies triumphantly out of fidelity to principle is to conceive the spirit of emulation. The hypothetical example becomes an insidious drive to action. The rod of love has been converted into the scepter of spiritual grace.

From this conclusion the entire body of revelation dissents. Men are not coerced by the majesty of an event. They may tremble before its splendor and be moved to action by its dramatic vividness. But salvation is not in emotion; nor can a human soul suffer a profound change of nature, as water breaks up into its analytic parts by the introduction of an electric current. To look at the cross and feel your cowardly temper suddenly vaporize and in its place the bold

confidence of Jesus appear, and then to hold that saving grace can be grasped in that way and in none other, is to award the rights of Christian discipleship to Bishop Cranmer only after he had recanted his Recantation, and thrust the hand that wrote it into the consuming fire. In a word, salvation reaches its zenith of perfection amid the heroics of a martyr's death. If this be true how shall we account for the quiet saints, who have shrunk from pain and suffering, yet have possessed an invincible assurance of personal acceptance?

## IV

*The cross dripping with the blood of sacrifice saves.* The creed of Calvary is definitely announced in this word. The language of the Sermon and above all the symbols of the Sacrament warn us that the foregoing sentiments about His death, while not without a measure of truth, do not contain the whole truth. One point is lacking. To supply it we must go to the ancient economy. The cross and the altar record the same spiritual facts. The parallel is not an ingenious fancy of the men of the Dispersion; it is organic to the Gospel. Two truths are inscribed on each, sin and sacrifice, and these two truths speak out in every drop of blood that falls from the riven side.

The death of Jesus gives for the first time a complete understanding of sin. How else shall a man entertain a convincing sense of the seriousness of his transgression? Two ways are usually suggested. We repair to general formulas sprung from the common conscience of the race. The Chaldean sagas proclaim in sententious phrase that man has lost his innocence and is unfit to enter the garden of the gods. Man is a

sinner. The dramatic poets of Greece ascribe every catastrophe—storm, earthquake, slaughter, sudden and untraced death—to the summary vengeance of heaven. Seneca, heir to a more scientific scheme of the world, carries human misery back to the deliberate neglect of well-established law, which if a man should carefully guard, he could pursue an even and happy course to the end. The recognition of sin has become a canon of good breeding, the orthodox explanation of social inequalities, and sometimes a fair excuse for moral inaction. But does the recitation of a formula force the sense of sin home upon my conscience? If I inspect the penitentiary, the asylum, the institute for the feeble-minded, and even the hospital, I may be impressed with the patent effects of sin; but do I find a copy of my own experience there? If I inquire into the system of law and order, the statutes on the books, the decisions of the court, I shall certainly be overtaken with a clamorous repetition of the formula, but my personal relation to its terms escapes me utterly. Sin is not taught by the rehearsal of a generalized truth.

The next method proposed for producing the sense of sin is to see it flaming in the conviction of another. Guilt, we affirm, is personal. It cannot be concealed in the brilliant phrase of an epigram. It belongs to the fabric of personality. Our human life is cast in one mould. By the universal currents of sympathy we can enter the sanctuary of another man's woes, and admit him to a share of our own. If I steal into the garden at Milan and peer in the face of Augustine as he struggles with the weight of sin, shall I immediately feel the burden of my own guilt—a heart dull and sodden, a soul content with earthly ambitions, a body per-



haps throbbing with the unsated yearnings of sense? Let us note the difference between dramatic sympathy and personal conviction. The collapse of many a religious revival rests here. The feeling which you took to be a violent shudder in the presence of sin is only the natural impulse which makes your neighbor's agony a momentary monitor of your soul. If you suppose you have undergone spiritual change, because tears stood in the eye and a quiver thrilled through the frame, in all probability you will wake up the next morning to a brutal disillusionment. Conviction of sin does not come in that fashion. I have no quarrel with the impulse of sympathy. Under fair conditions it may become an instrument for the true appreciation of sin. But I dispute the right of preacher or moralist to confuse the two psychological acts, and add the gravity of the one to the purely formal expression of the other. You can no more excite in yourself anguish for sin by looking at Augustine, than you can analyze the elements of pain by standing at the side of a strong man whose body is writhing with the convulsions of a deadly disease. Many a mother has sat by the bed of her suffering child and fancied her own breast vibrating with kindred pain. Sympathy has done its work, but pain, real organic pain, can never be understood till we have lain down under the hand of accident or disease, and heard for ourselves nature's bitter protest against her broken laws. If by some strange fellowship St. Francis could reproduce the wounds of Christ in his flesh, then you may repeat the conviction of sin by dwelling upon the experience of your neighbor. But science has steadily discouraged the pursuit of the mystic's method.

How then shall we gain a private view of sin if gen-



eralization and testimony fail? The query is breathed by the fainting heart of the world. Today, as in the time of David, men are asking, Where shall rest be found? Rest? What kind of rest? Not rest of body, for one may fall on sleep and forget his tire; not rest from pain, for the "way" is always open as the Stoics taught; not rest from the vicissitudes of intellectual doubt, for here and there a Lao-tse, a Nietzsche, bravely assures us that he has rightly "divided" the truth of the world. Rest from what? Manifestly from the deepest agony that human life knows, when alone with self and aface with the evidence of concrete sin we ask how conscience can be curbed and the bitterness of soul dulled.

It is this query which Christianity answers by pointing to the cross. There the sin of the world is printed and there the gravity of sin for the first time is understood. There as in so many other vital matters the value of one fact is determined by its relation to another. In order to effect the obliteration of sin Jesus the Son of God suffered death. The principle of sacrifice by death is not unknown in the annals of science. The stalwart oak battling with the strength of a thousand tempests cannot escape from its rudimentary shell, except as the acorn is hidden in the ground and given over to die. Natural law, God's law, is supreme as well in the evolution of society. The proud monuments of civil liberty are built upon the sacrifice of uncounted generations. Imperial manhood has passed through blood and death to its current honor. Fearless souls guided with inspired thought leap not to their thrones by sudden desire, but

"men may rise on stepping stones  
Of their dead selves to higher things."

The principle of sacrifice is not the edict of mysticism. It was not fashioned by the uncritical taste of early mythology, then stripped of its poetic form and woven into the seams of a spiritual religion. Sacrifice is the identification of Godhead with humanity's self. Since sin is by natural law bound up with the issues of death it was necessary that divine sacrifice should not decline the bitterest death of all. Jesus if He died must be impaled upon the cross, which under every sun has been the dark consort of guilt and shame. Sacrifice such as this seemed to the secular sense of men a proof of defeat. "He saved others," they jeer, "himself he cannot save." From the torments of fever and the black pall of death He had indeed rescued many, but in the last great effort of atoning service Jesus could not refuse the cross. In the temple of manhood sacrifice has chiseled memorials of enduring worth—Socrates, Dante, Milton, Lincoln. It has won its supreme triumphs in the economy of grace, for here it has wrested a world from the tenacious embrace of spiritual doom.

Like the smoking altar whose promise it fulfilled the Cross becomes a challenge to unappeased conscience. Formal definition, legal precept, sympathetic reaction to another's penitence have failed to impart a convincing sense of sin. These are dramatic units apart from the common experience of life. But when Christ calls with His gaping wounds, as through the pictured canvas He called to Zinzendorf, "This I did for thee, what hast thou done for me?"—the voice of sacrifice is vibrant both with entreaty and command. The sin of man, the sin of my soul, is now for the first time a recognized fact. Calvary is not the seat of prescriptive judgment, Calvary is not the goad to loyal emu-

lation. Law and example are but incidents in its appeal. The creed of Calvary is written in Jesus' sacrifice for sin. By this creed the church has for many ages shaped her program and practice. She has conquered ignorance by giving plentifully of her benevolent tuition; she has overwhelmed vice by the unstained virtue of her sons; she has pierced the ramparts of pagan despair by an unreckoned expenditure of her best blood and treasure. She knows what it means to sacrifice for another. Hence she cannot be unappreciative of her Lord's desire to forestall by the quiet reassurance of faith the disciple's cry of terror at His tragic withdrawal from the world. If Jesus bears in His body the efficacious prints of atonement, no less has the church written upon her heart the unfaltering syllables of sacrificial service. Through storm and sunshine, pain and death her sons have nobly met the royal challenge—

*Greater love hath no man than this,  
That a man lay down his life for his friends.*





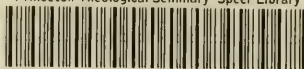




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